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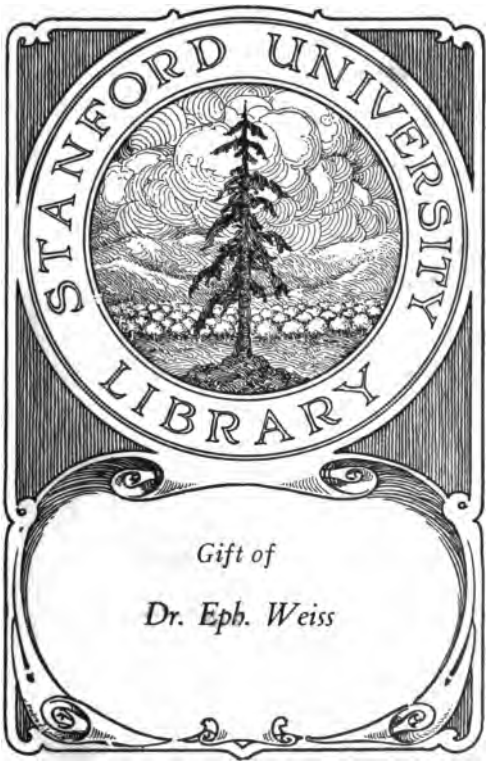

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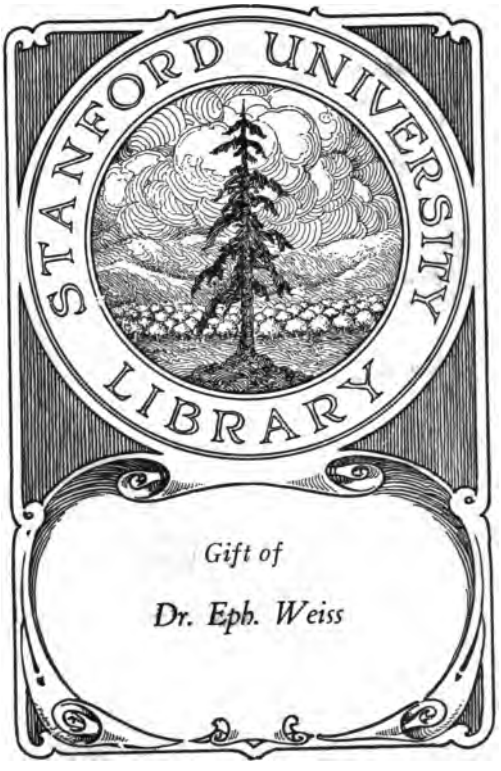

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THE

WORKS

OF

HANNAH MORE,

IN FOUR VOLUMES:

INCLUDING

SEVERAL PIECES NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

TO improve the habits, and raise the principles of the common people, at a time when their dangers and temptations, moral and political, were multiplied beyond the example of any former period, was the motive which impelled the Author of these volumes to devise and prosecute the institution of the Cheap Repository. This plan was established with an humble wish, not only to counteract vice and profligacy on the one hand, but error, discontent, and false religion on the other. And as an appetite for reading had, from a variety of causes, been increasing among the inferior ranks in this country, it was judged expedient, at this critical period, to supply such wholesome aliment as might give a new direction to their taste, and abate their relish for those corrupt and inflammatory publications which the consequences of the French Revolution have been so fatally pouring in upon us.

The success of the plan exceeded the most sanguine expectation of its projector. Above two millions of the Tracts were sold within the first year, besides very large numbers in Ireland; and they continue to be very extensively circulated, in their original

original form of single Tracts, by Evans, in Long-lane, West Smithfield, Hatchard in Piccadilly, and Hazard in Bath, as well as in three bound volumes sold by Rivington, Hatchard, and all other booksellers.

As these stories, though *principally*, are not calculated *exclusively* for the middle and lower classes of society, the Author has, at the desire of her friends, selected those which were written by herself, and presented them to the public in this collection of her works, in an enlarged and improved form.

THE

ly intimated by the Royal Prophet in the nineteenth psalm. That most beautiful description of the greatness and power of God exhibited in the former part, plainly seeming intended to introduce, illustrate, and unfold the operations of the word and spirit of God on the heart in the latter. And he began to run a parallel in his own mind between the effects of that highly poetical and glowing picture of the material sun in searching and warming the earth, in the first six verses, and the spiritual operation attributed to the "law of God," which fills up the remaining part of the psalm. And he persuaded himself that the divine spirit which dictated this fine hymn, had left it as a kind of general intimation to what use we were to convert our admiration of created things; namely, that we might be led by a sight of them to raise our views from the kingdom of nature to that of grace, and that the contemplation of God in his works might draw us to contemplate him in his word.

In the midst of these reflections, Mr. Johnson's attention was all of a sudden called off by the barking of a Shepherd's dog, and looking up he spied one of those little huts, which are here and there to be seen on those great downs; and near it was the Shepherd himself busy employed with his dog in collecting together his vast flock of sheep. As he drew nearer, he perceived him to be a clean, well looking, poor man, near fifty years of age. His coat, though at first it had probably been of one dark colour, had been in a long course of years so often patched with different sorts of cloth, that it was now become hard to say which had been the original colour. But this, while it gave a plain proof of the Shepherd's poverty, equally proved the exceeding neatness, industry, and good management of his wife. His stockings no less proved her good housewifery,

wifery, for they were entirely covered with darns of different coloured worsted, but had not a hole in them; and his shirt, though nearly as coarse as the sails of a ship, was as white as the drifted snow, and was neatly mended where time had either made a rent, or worn it thin. This furnishes a rule of judging, by which one shall seldom be deceived. If I meet with a labourer, hedging, ditching, or mending the highways with his stockings and shirt tight and whole, however mean and bad his other garments are, I have seldom failed, on visiting his cottage, to find that also clean and well ordered, and his wife notable, and worthy of encouragement. Whereas a poor woman, who will be lying a-bed, or gossiping with her neighbours when she ought to be fitting out her husband in a cleanly manner, will seldom be found to be very good in other respects.

This was not the case with our Shepherd: and Mr. Johnson was not more struck with the decency of his mean and frugal dress, than with his open honest countenance, which bore strong marks of health, cheerfulness, and spirit.

Mr. Johnson, who was on a journey, and somewhat fearful from the appearance of the sky, that rain was at no great distance, accosted the Shepherd with asking what sort of weather he thought it would be on the morrow. "It will be such weather as "pleases me," answered the Shepherd. Though the answer was delivered in the mildest and most civil tone that could be imagined, the gentleman thought the words themselves rather rude and surly, and asked him how that could be. "Because," replied the Shepherd, "it will be such weather as shall please "God, and whatever pleases him always pleases "me."

Mr. Johnson, who delighted in good men and good things, was very well satisfied with his reply. For

he justly thought that though an hypocrite may easily contrive to appear better than he really is to a stranger; and that no one should be too soon trusted, merely for having a few good words in his mouth; yet as he knew that "out of the abundance of the "heart the mouth speaketh;" he always accustomed himself to judge favourably of those who had a serious deportment and solid manner of speaking. It looks as if it proceeded from a good habit, said he, and though I may now and then be deceived by it, yet it has not often happened to me to be so. Whereas if a man accosts me with an idle, dissolute, vulgar, indecent, or prophane expression, I have never been deceived in him, but have generally on inquiry found his character to be as bad as his language gave me room to expect.

He entered into conversation with the Shepherd in the following manner:—"Yours is a troublesome "life, honest friend," said he.—"To be sure, sir," replied the Shepherd, "'tis not a very lazy life; but "'tis not near so toilsome as that which my GREAT "MASTER led for my sake; and he had every state "and condition of life at his choice, and *chose* a hard "one; while I only submit to the lot that is appointed me."—"You are exposed to great cold and "heat," said the gentleman;—"true, sir," said the shepherd; "but then I am not exposed to great "temptations; and so throwing one thing against "another, God is pleased to contrive to make things "more equal than we poor, ignorant, short-sighted "creatures, are apt to think. David was happier "when he kept his father's sheep on such a plain as "this, and employed in singing some of his own "psalms perhaps, than ever he was when he became "king of Israel and Judah. And I dare say we "should never have had some of the most beautiful "texts in all those fine Psalms, if he had not been a "shepherd.

shepherd, which enabled him to make so many fine comparisons and similitudes, as one may say, from country life, flocks of sheep, hills, and vallies, fields of corn, and fountains of water."

"You think then," said the gentleman, "That a "laborious life is a happy one."—"I do, sir, and "more so especially, as it exposes a man to fewer "sins. If king Saul had continued a poor laborious "man to the end of his days, he might have lived "happy and honest, and died a natural death in his "bed at last, which you know, sir, was more than "he did. But I speak with reverence, for it was "divine Providence overruled all that, you know, "sir and I do not presume to make comparisons. "Besides, sir, my employment has been particularly "honoured—Moses was a shepherd in the plains of "Midian. It was to 'shepherds keeping their flocks "'by night,' that the angels appeared in Bet-"lehem, to tell the best news, the gladdest tidings, "that ever were revealed to poor sinful men: often "and often has the thought warmed my poor heart "in the coldest night, and filled me with more joy "and thankfulness than the best supper could have done."

Here the shepherd stopped, for he began to feel that he had made too free, and had talked too long. But Mr. Johnson was so well pleased with what he said, and with the chearfull contented manner in which he said it, that he desired him to go on freely, for that it was a pleasure to him to meet with a plain man, who, without any kind of learning but what he had got from the bible, was able to talk so well on a subject in which all men, high and low, rich and poor, are equally concerned.

"Indeed I am afraid I make too bold, sir, for it "better becomes me to listen to such a gentleman "as you seem to be, than to talk in my poor way: but

" but as I was saying, sir, I wonder all working
" men do not derive as great joy and delight as I do
" from thinking how God has honoured poverty!
" Oh! sir, what great, or rich, or mighty men
" have had such honour put on them, or their con-
" dition, as shepherds. tent-makers, fishermen, and
" carpenters have had? Besides, it seems as if God
" honoured industry also. The way of duty is not
" only the way of safety, but it is remarkable how
" many in the exercise of the common duties of
" their calling, humbly and rightly performed, as
" we may suppose, have found honours, preferment,
" and blessing; while it does nor occur to me that
" the whole sacred volume presents a single instance
" of a like blessing conferred on idleness. Rebekah,
" Rachel, and Jethro's daughters, were diligently
" employed in the lowest occupations of a country
" life, when Providence, by means of those very
" occupations, raised them up husbands so famous
" in history, as Isaac, Jacob, and the prophet Mo-
" ses. The shepherds were neither playing nor
" sleeping, but ' watching their flocks,' when they
" received the news of a Saviour's birth; and the
" woman of Samaria, by the laborious office of
" drawing water, was brought to the knowledge of
" Him who gave her to drink of ' living water."

" My honest friend," said the gentleman, I per-
" ceive you are well acquainted with scripture."—
" Yes, sir, pretty well, blessed be God! through
" his mercy I learnt to read when I was a little boy;
" though reading was not so common when I was a
" child, as I am told, through the goodness of Pro-
" vidence and generosity of the rich, it is likely to
" become now-a-days. I believe there is no day for
" the last thirty years, that I have not peeped at my
" bible. If we can't find time to read a chapter, I
" defy any man to say he can't find time to read a
verse;

" verse; and a single text, sir, well followed and
" put in practice every day, would make no bad
" figure at the year's end; three hundred and sixty-
" five texts, without the loss of a moment's time,
" would make a pretty stock, a little golden trea-
" sury, as one may say, from new-year's day to
" new-year's day; and if children were brought up
" to it, they would come to look for their text as
" naturally as they do for their breakfast. No labour-
" ing man, 'tis true, has so much leisure as a shep-
" herd, for while the flock is feeding, I am obliged
" to be still, and at such times I can now and then
" tap a shoe for my children or myself, which is a
" great saving to us, and while I am doing that I
" repeat a chapter or a psalm, which makes the time
" pass pleasantly in this wild solitary place. I can
" say the best part of the New Testament by heart;
" I believe I should not say the best part, for every
" part is good, but I mean the greatest part. I
" have led but a lonely life, and have often had but
" little to eat, but my bible has been meat, drink,
" and company to me, as I may say, and when want
" and trouble have come upon me, I don't know
" what I should have done indeed, sir, if I had not
" had the promises of this book for my stay and
" support."

" You have had great difficulties then?" said Mr Johnson. " Why, as to that, sir, not more than
" neighbours' fare; I have but little cause to com-
" plain, and much to be thankful; but I have had
" some little struggles, as I will leave you to judge.
" I have a wife and eight children, whom I bred up
" in that little cottage which you see under the hill
" about half a mile off." What, that with the smoke
" coming out of the chimney?" said the gentleman
" O no, sir," replied the shepherd, smiling, we
" have seldom smoke in the evening, for we have
" little

" little to cook, and firing is very dear in these parts.
" 'Tis that cottage which you see on the left hand
" of the church, near that little tuft of hawtorns.
—" What, that hovel with only one room above and
" below, with scarcely any chimney? how is it pos-
" sible you can live there with such a family!—" O!
" it is very possible and very certain too," cried the Shepherd. " How many better men have been worse
" lodged! how many good christians have perished
" in prisons and dungeons, in comparison of which
" my cottage is a palace! The house is very well,
" sir; and if the rain did not sometimes beat down
" upon us through the thatch when we are a-bed, I
" should not desire a better; for I have health,
" peace, and liberty, and no man maketh me
" afraid."

" Well, I will certainly call on you before it be
" long; but how can you contrive to lodge so many
" children?"—We do the best we can, sir. My
" poor wife is a very sickly woman, or we should
" always have done tolerably well. There are no
" gentry in the parish, so that she has not met with
" any great assistance in her sickness. The good
" curate of the parish who lives in that pretty par-
" sonage in the valley, is very willing, but not very
" able to assist us on these trying occasions, for he
" has little enough for himself, and a large family
" into the bargain. Yet he does what he can, and
" more than many richer men do, and more than
" he can well afford. Besides that, his prayers and
" good advice we are always sure of, and we are
" truly thankful for that, for a man must give, you
" know, sir, according to what he hath, and not
" according to what he hath not."

" I am afraid," said Mr. Johnson, " that your
" difficulties may sometimes lead you to repine."

" No,

"No, sir," replied the Shepherd, "it pleases "God to give me two ways of bearing up under "them. I pray that they may be either removed "or sanctified to me. Besides, if my road be right "I am contented, though it be rough and uneven. "I do not so much stagger at hardships in the right "way, as I dread a false security, and a hollow "peace, while I may be walking in a more smooth, "but less safe way. Besides, sir, I strengthen my "faith by recollecting what the best men have suf- "fered, and my hope, with the view of the short- "ness of all suffering. It is a good hint, sir, of "the vanity of all earthly possessions, that though "the whole Land of Promise was his, yet the first "bit of ground which Abraham, the father of the "faithful, got possession of, in the land of Canaan, "was a *grave*."

"Are you in any distress at present?" said Mr. Johnson. "No, sir, thank God," replied the Shepherd. "I get my shilling a-day, and most of my "children will soon be able to earn something; for "we have only three under five years old."—Only!" said the gentleman, "that is a heavy burden."— "Not at all; God fits the back to it. Though my "wife is not able to do any out-of-door work, yet "she breeds up our children to such habits of indus- "try, that our little maids, before they are six years "old, can first get a halfpenny, and then a penny "a day by knitting. The boys who are too little to "do hard work, get a trifle by keeping the birds off "the corn; for this the farmers will give them a "penny or two-pence, and now and then a bit of "bread and cheese into the bargain. When the "season of crow-keeping is over, then they glean "or pick stones; any thing is better than idleness, "sir, and if they did not get a farthing by it, I "would make them do it just the same, for the sake "of giving them early habits of labour.

"So

" So you see, sir, I am not so badly off as many " are; nay, if it were not that it costs me so much " in 'pothecary's stuff for my poor wife, I should " reckon myself well off, nay I do reckon myself " well off, for blessed be God, he has granted her " life to my prayers, and I would work myself to a " 'natomy, and live on one meal a-day, to add any " comfort to her valuable life; indeed I have often " done the last, and thought it no great matter " neither."

While they were in this part of the discourse, a fine plump cherry-cheek little girl ran up out of breath, with a smile on her young happy face, and without taking any notice of the gentleman, cried out with great joy—" Look here, father, only see " how much I have got!" Mr. Johnson was much struck with her simplicity, but puzzled to know what was the occasion of this great joy. On looking at her he perceived a small quantity of coarse wool, some of which had found its way through the holes of her clean, but scanty and ragged woollen apron. The father said, " this has been a success- " ful day indeed, Molly, but don't you see the gen- " tleman?" Molly now made a curtsey down to the very ground; while Mr. Johnson inquired into the cause of the mutual satisfaction which both father and daughter had expressed, at the unusual good fortune of the day.

" Sir," said the Shepherd, " poverty is a great " sharpener of the wits.—My wife and I cannot en- " dure to see our children (poor as they are) with- " out shoes and stockings, not only on account of " the pinching cold which cramps their poor little " limbs, but because it degrades and debases them; " and poor people who have but little regard to ap- " pearances, will seldom be found to have any great " regard for honesty and goodness; I don't say this

is

"is always the case; but I am sure it is so too often. "Now shoes and stockings being very dear, we "could never afford to get them without a little con- "trivance. I must shew you how I manage about "the shoes when you condescend to call at our cot- "tage, sir; as to stockings, this is one way we take "to help to get them. My young ones, who are "too little to do much work, sometimes wander at "odd hours over the hills for the chance of finding "what little wool the sheep may drop when they "rub themselves, as they are apt to do, against the "bushes*. These scattered bits of wool the chil- "dren pick out of the brambles, which I see have "torn sad holes in Molly's apron to-day; they carry "this wool home, and when they have got a pretty "parcel together, their mother cards it; for she "can sit and card in the chimney corner, when she "is not able to wash, or work about the house. "The biggest girl then spins it; it does very well "for us without dying, for poor people must not "stand for the colour of their stockings. After this "our little boys knit it for themselves, while they "are employed in keeping cows in the fields, and "after they get home at night. As for the knitting "which the girls and their mother do, that is chief- "ly for sale, which helps to pay our rent."

Mr. Johnson lifted up his eyes in silent astonish- ment at the shifts which honest poverty can make rather than beg or steal; and was surprised to think how many ways of subsisting there are, which those who live at their ease little suspect. He secretly re- solved to be more attentive to his own petty expen- ces than he had hitherto been; and to be more watch- ful that nothing was wasted in his family.

* This piece of frugal industry is not imaginary, but a real fact, as is the character of the Shepherd, and his uncommon knowledge of the scrip- tures.

But

But to return to the Shepherd. Mr. Johnson told him, that as he must needs be at his friend's house, who lived many miles off, that night, he could not, as he wished to do, make a visit to his cottage at present. "But I will certainly do it," said he, "on "my return, for I long to see your wife and her "nice little family, and to be an eye-witness of her "neatness and good management." The poor man's tears started into his eyes on hearing the commendation bestowed on his wife; and wiping them off, with the sleeve of his coat, for he was not worth a handkerchief in the world, he said—"Oh, sir, "you just now, I am afraid, called me an humble "man, but indeed I am a very proud one."—"Proud!" exclaimed Mr. Johnson, "I hope not "—Pride is a great sin, and as the poor are liable "to it as well as the rich, so good a man as you "seem to be, ought to guard against it."—"Sir," "said he, you are right, but I am not proud of myself, God knows, I have nothing to be proud of. "I am a poor sinner, but indeed, sir, I am proud "of my wife: she is not only the most tidy, notable "woman on the plain, but she is the kindest wife "and mother, and the most contented, thankful "christsan that I know. Last year I thought I "should have lost her in a violent fit of the rheumatism, caught by going to work too soon after her "lying-in, I fear; for 'tis but a bleak coldish place, "as you may see, sir, in winter, and sometimes "the snow lies so long under the hill, that I can "hardly make myself a path to get out and buy a "few necessaries in the next village; and we are "afraid to send out the children, for fear they "should be lost when the snow is deep. So, as I "was saying, the poor soul was very bad indeed, "and for several weeks lost the use of all her limbs "except her hands; a merciful Providence spared

"her

" her the use of these, so that when she could not
" turn in her bed, she could contrive to patch a rag
" or two for her family. She was always saying,
" had it not been for the great goodness of God, she
" might have had her hands lame as well as her feet,
" or the palsy instead of the rheumatism, and then
" she could have done nothing—but, nobody had so
" many mercies as she had.

" I will not tell you what we suffered during that
" bitter weather, sir, but my wife's faith and patience
" during that trying time, were as good a lesson to
" me as any sermon I could hear, and yet Mr. Jen-
" kins gave us very comfortable ones too, that help-
" ed to keep up my spirits."

" I fear, Shepherd," said Mr. Johnson, " you have
" found this to be but a bad world."

" Yes, sir," replied the Shepherd, " but it is go-
" verned by a good God. And tho' my trials have
" now and then been sharp, why then, sir, as the
" saying is, if the pain be violent, it is seldom lasting,
" and if it be but moderate, why then we can bear it
" the longer, and when it is quite taken away, ease
" is the more precious, and gratitude is quickened by
" the remembrance; thus every way and in every
" case I can always find out a reason for vindicating
" Providence."

" But," said Mr. Johnson, " how do you do to
" support yourself under the pressure of actual want.
" Is not hunger a great weakener of your faith?"

" Sir," replied the Shepherd, " I endeavour to
" live upon the promises. You who abound in the
" good things of this world are apt to set too high
" a value on them. Suppose, sir, the king, seeing
" me hard at work, were to say to me, that, if I
" would patiently work on till Christmas, a fine pa-
" lace and a great estate should be the reward of my
" labours. Do you think, sir, that a little hunger, or

" a little

" a little cold, or a little wet, would make me flinch,
" when I was sure that a few months would put me
" in possession? Should I not say to myself frequent-
" ly—chear up Shepherd, 'tis but till Christmas!
" now is there not much less difference between this
" supposed day and Christmas, when I should take
" possession of the estate and palace, than there is
" between time and eternity, when I am sure of en-
" tering on a kingdom not made with hands? There
" is some comparison between a moment and a thou-
" sand years, because a thousand years are made up
" of moments, all time being made up of the same
" sort of stuff, as I may say; while there is no sort
" of comparison between the longest portion of time
" and eternity. You know, sir, there is no way of
" measuring two things, one of which has length and
" breadth, which shows it must have an end some-
" where, and another thing, which being eternal, is
" without end and without measure."

" But," said Mr. Johnson, " is not the fear of
" death sometimes too strong for your faith?"

" Blessed be God, sir," replied the Shepherd,
" the dark passage through the valley of the shadow
" of death is made safe by the power of Him who
" conquered death. I know, indeed, we shall go
" as naked out of this world as we came into it, but an
" humble penitent will not be found naked in the other
" world, sir. My bible tells me of garments of praise
" and robes of righteousness. And is it not a support,
" sir, under any of the petty difficulties and distres-
" ses here, to be assured by the word of Him who
" cannot lie, that those who were in white robes
" came out of great tribulation? But, sir, I beg
" your pardon for being so talkative. Indeed you
" great folks can hardly imagine how it raises and
" chears a poor man's heart, when such as you con-
" descend to talk familiarly to him on religious sub-
" jects.

" jects. It seem to be a practical comment on that " text which says, *the rich and poor meet together,* " *the Lord is the maker of them all.* And so far from " creating disrespect, sir, and that nonsensical wick- " ed notion about equality, it rather prevents it. But " to return to my wife. One Sunday afternoon " when she was at the worst, as I was coming out of " church, for I went one part of the day, and my eld- " est daughter the other, so my poor wife was never " left alone; as I was coming out of church, I say, " Mr. Jenkins, the minister, called out to me, and " asked me how my wife did, saying he had been " kept from coming to see her by the deep fall of " snow, and indeed from the parsonage-house to my " hovel it was quite impassable. I gave him all the " particulars he asked, and I am afraid a good many " more, for my heart was quite full. He kindly gave " me a shilling, and said he would certainly try to " pick out his way and come and see her in a day or " two.

" While he was talking to me, a plain farmer-look- " ing gentleman in boots, who stood by, listened to " all I said, but seemed to take no notice. It was " Mr. Jenkins's wife's father, who was come to pass " the Christmas-holidays at the parsonage-house. I " had always heard him spoken of as a plain frugal " man, who lived close himself, but was remarked to " give away more than any of his show-away neigh- " bours.

" Well! I went home with great spirits at this sea- " sonable and unexpected supply; for we had tap- " ped our last sixpence, and there was little work to " be had on account of the weather. I told my wife " I had not come back empty-handed.—' No, I dare " say not,' says she, ' you have been serving a mas- " ter *who filleth the hungry with good things, though* " *he sendeth the rich empty away.*'—True, Mary,

" I, we

" says I, we seldom fail to get good spiritual food from " Mr. Jenkins, but to-day he has kindly supplied our " bodily wants. She was more thankful when I " shewed her the shilling, than, I dare say, some of " your great people are when they get a hundred " pounds."

Mr. Johnson's heart smote him when he heard such a value set upon a shilling; surely, said he to himself, I will never waste another; but he said nothing to the Shepherd, who thus pursued his story:

" Next morning before I went out, I sent part of " the money to buy a little ale and brown sugar to " put into her water-gruel; which you know, sir, " made it nice and nourishing. I went out to cleave " wood in a farm-yard, for there was no standing out " on the plain, after such snow as had fallen in the " night. I went with a lighter heart than usual, be- " cause I had left my poor wife a little better; and " comfortably supplied for this day, and I now re- " solved more than ever to trust God for the supplies " of the next. When I came back at night, my wife " fell a crying as soon as she saw me. This, I own, " I thought but a bad return for the blessings she had " so lately received, and so I told her.—' O', said " she, ' it is too much, we are too rich; I am now " frightened, not lest we should have no portion in " this world, but for fear we should have our whole " portion in it. Look here, John!' So saying, she " uncovered the bed whereon she lay, and shewed " me two warm, thick, new blankets. I could not " believe my own eyes, sir, because when I went out " in the morning, I had left her with no other cover- " ing than our little old, thin, blue rug. I was still " more amazed when she put half a crown into my " hand, telling me she had had a visit from Mr. " Jenkins, and Mr. Jones, the latter of whom had " bestowed all these good things upon us. Thus,

" sir,

" sir, have our lives been crowned with mercies.—
" My wife got about again, and I do believe, under
" Providence, it was owing to these comforts ; for
" the rheumatism, sir, without blankets by night and
" flannel by day, is but a baddish job, especially to
" people who have little or no fire. She will always
" be a weakly body ; but thank God her soul pros-
" pers and is in health. But I beg your pardon, sir,
" for talking on at this rate."—" Not at all, not at
" all," said Mr. Johnson ; " I am much pleased
" with your story, you shall certainly see me in a
" few days. Good night. So saying, he slipped a crown into his hand and rode off. Surely, said the Shepherd, *goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life*, as he gave the money to his wife when he got home at night.

As to Mr. Johnson, he found abundant matter for his thoughts during the rest of his journey. On the whole he was more disposed to envy than to pity the Shepherd. I have seldom seen, said he, so happy a man. It is a sort of happiness which the world could not give, and which I plainly see, it has not been able to take away. This must be the true spirit of religion. I see more and more, that true goodness is not merely a thing of words and opinions, but a living principle brought into every common action of a man's life. What else could have supported this poor couple under every bitter trial of want and sickness ? No, my honest Shepherd, I do not pity, but I respect and even honour thee ; and I will visit thy poor hovel on my return to Salisbury with as much pleasure as I am now going to the house of my friend.

If Mr. Johnson keeps his word in sending me the account of his visit to the Shepherd's cottage, I shall be very glad to entertain my readers with it.

PART II.

I AM willing to hope that my readers will not be sorry to hear some farther particulars of their old acquaintance *the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain.* They will call to mind that at the end of the first part, he was returning home full of gratitude for the favours he had received from Mr. Johnson, whom he left pursuing his journey, after having promised to make a visit to the Shepherd's cottage.

Mr. Johnson, after having passed some time with his friend, set out on his return to Salisbury, and on the Saturday evening reached a very small inn, a mile or two, distant from the Shepherd's village; for he never travelled on a Sunday without such a reason as he might be able to produce at the day of judgment. He went the next morning to the church nearest the house where he had passed the night; and after taking such refreshment as he could get at that house, he walked on to find out the Shepherd's cottage. His reason for visiting him on a Sunday was chiefly, because he supposed it to be the only day which the Shepherd's employment allowed him to pass at home with his family; and as Mr. Johnson had been struck with his talk, he thought it would be neither unpleasant nor unprofitable to observe how a man who carried such an appearance of piety spent his Sunday; for though he was so low in the world, this gentleman was not above entering very closely into his character, of which he thought he should be able to form a better judgment, by seeing whether his practice at home kept pace with his professions abroad;

abroad: for it is not so much by observing how people talk, as how they live, that we ought to judge of their characters.

After a pleasant walk Mr. Johnson got within sight of the cottage, to which he was directed by the clump of hawthorns and the broken chimney. He wished to take the family by surprise; and walking gently up to the house he stood awhile to listen. The door being half open, he saw the Shepherd, (who looked so respectable in his Sunday coat that he should hardly have known him,) his wife and their numerous young family, drawing round their little table, which was covered with a clean though very coarse cloth. There stood on it a large dish of potatoes, a brown pitcher, and a piece of a coarse loaf. The wife and children stood in silent attention, while the Shepherd, with uplifted hands and eyes, devoutly begged the blessing of Heaven on their homely fare. Mr. Johnson could not help sighing to reflect, that he had sometimes seen better dinners eaten with less appearance of thankfulness.

The Shepherd and his wife then sat down with great seeming cheerfulness, but the children stood; and while the mother was helping them, little fresh-coloured Molly, who had picked the wool from the bushes with so much delight, cried out, "Father I "wish I was big enough to say grace, I am sure I "should say it very heartily to-day, for I was think-"ing what must *poor* people do who have no salt to "their potatoes, and do but look, our dish is quite "full."—"That is the true way of thinking, Mol-"ly," said the father; "in whatever concerns bo-"dily wants and bodily comforts, it is our duty to "compare our own lot with the lot of those who are "worse off, and this will keep us thankful: on the "other hand, whenever we are tempted to set up "our own wisdom or goodness, we must compare

" ourselves with those who are wiser and better, and " that will keep us humble." Molly was now so hungry, and found the potatoes so good, that she had no time to make any more remarks; but was devouring her dinner very heartily, when the barking of the great dog drew her attention from her trencher to the door, and spying the stranger, she cried out, " Look " father, see here, if yonder is not the good gentle- " man!" Mr. Johnson finding himself discovered, immediately walked in, and was heartily welcomed by the honest Shepherd, who told his wife that this was the gentleman to whom they were so much obliged.

The good woman began, as some very neat people are rather too apt to do, with making many apologies that her house was not cleaner, and that things were not in fitter order to receive such a gentleman. Mr. Johnson however, on looking round, could discover nothing but the most perfect neatness. The trenchers on which they were eating were almost as white as their linen; and notwithstanding the number and smallness of their children, there was not the least appearance of dirt or litter. The furniture was very simple and poor, hardly indeed amounting to bare necessaries. It consisted of four brown wooden chairs, which by constant rubbing, were become as bright as a looking glass; an iron pot and kettle; a poor old grate, which scarcely held a handful of coal, and out of which the little fire that had been in it appeared to have been taken, as soon as it had answered the end for which it had been lighted—that of boiling their potatoes. Over the chimney stood an old fashioned broad bright candlestick, and a still brighter spit; it was pretty clear that this last was kept rather for ornament than use. An old carved elbow chair, and a chest of the same date which stood in the corner, were considered as he most valuable part of the

Shepherd's

Shepherd's goods, having been in his family for three generations. But all these were lightly esteemed by him, in comparison of another possession, which, added to the above, made up the whole of what he had inherited from his father; and which last he would not have parted with, if no other could have been had, for a king's ransom: this was a large old bible, which lay on the window seat, neatly covered with brown cloth, variously patched. This sacred book was most reverently preserved from dog's ears, dirt, and every other injury, but such as time and much use had made it suffer in spite of care. On the clean white walls was pasted, a hymn on the Crucifixion of our Saviour, a print of the Prodigal Son, the Shepherd's Hymn, a *New History of a True Book*, and Patient Joe, or the Newcastle Collier*.

After the first salutations were over, Mr. Johnson said, that if they would go on with their dinner he would sit down. Though a good deal ashamed, they thought it more respectful to obey the gentleman, who having cast his eye on their slender provisions, gently rebuked the Shepherd for not having indulged himself, as it was Sunday, with a morsel of bacon to relish his potatoes. The Shepherd said nothing, but poor Mary coloured and hung down her head, saying, "Indeed, sir, it is not my fault, I "did beg my husband to allow himself a bit of meat "to-day out of your honour's bounty; but he was "too good to do it, and it is all for my sake." The Shepherd seemed unwilling to come to an explanation, but Mr. Johnson desired Mary to go on. So she continued: "You must know, sir, that both of "us, next to a sin, dread a debt, and indeed in some "cases a debt, is a sin; but with all our care and

* Printed for the Cheap Repository, price ½d. each.

"pains

" pains we have never been able quite to pay off the
" doctor's bill for that bad fit of rheumatism which I
" had last winter. Now when you were pleased to
" give my husband that kind present the other day,
" I heartily desired him to buy a bit of meat for
" Sunday, as I said before, that he might have a
" little refreshment for himself out of your kindness.
" ' But,' answered he, ' Mary, it is never out of
" my mind long together that we still owe a few
" shillings to the doctor, (and thank God it is all we
" did owe in the world). Now if I carry him this
" money directly it will not only shew him our ho-
" nesty and our goodwill; but it will be an encou-
" ragement to him to come to you another time in
" case you should be taken once more in such a bad
" fit; for I must own,' added my poor husband,
" ' that the thought of your being so terribly ill
" without any help, is the only misfortune that I
" want courage to face."

Here the grateful woman's tears ran down so fast that she could not go on. She wiped them with the corner of her apron, and humbly begged pardon for making so free. " Indeed, sir, said the Shepherd, " though my wife is full as unwilling to be in debt " as myself, yet I could hardly prevail on her to " consent to my paying this money just then, because " she said it was hard I should not have a taste of the " gentleman's bounty myself. But for once, sir, I " would have my own way. For you must know, " as I pass best part of my time alone tending my " sheep, 'tis a great point with me, sir, to get com-
" fortable matter for my own thoughts; so that 'tis
" rather self interest in me to allow myself in no
" pleasures and no practices that won't bear thinking
" on over and over. For when one is a good deal
" alone, you know, sir, all one's bad deeds do so
" rush in upon one, as I may say, and so torment

" one,

" one, that there is no true comfort to be had but in " keeping clear of wrong doings and false pleasures; " and that I suppose may be one reason why so ma- " ny folks hate to stay a bit by themselves.—But as " I was saying—when I came to think the matter " over on the hill yonder, said I to myself, a good " dinner is a good thing I grant, and yet it will be " but cold comfort to me a week after, to be able " to say—To be sure I had a nice shoulder of mut- " ton last Sunday for dinner, thanks to the good gen- " tleman! but then I am in debt. I *had* a rare din- " ner, that's certain, but the pleasure of that has " long been over, and the debt still remains. I have " spent the crown; and now if my poor wife should " be taken in one of those fits again, die she must, " unless God work a miracle to prevent it, for I can " get no help for her. This thought settled all; " and I set off directly and paid the crown to the " doctor with as much chearfulness as I should have " felt on sitting down to the fattest shoulder of mut- " ton that ever was roasted. And if I was content- " ed at the time, think how much more happy I " have been at the remembrance! O sir, there are " no pleasures worth the name but such as bring no " plague or penitence after them."

Mr. Johnson was satisfied with the Shepherd's reasons; and agreed, that though a good dinner was not to be despised, yet it was not worthy to be compared with *a contented mind, which* (as the Bible truly says) *is a continual feast.* " But come," said the good gentleman, " what have we got in this brown mug?" —" As good water said the Shepherd, " as any in " the king's dominions. I have heard of countries " beyond sea in which there is no wholesome water; " nay, I have been myself in a great town not far " off, where they are obliged to buy all the water " which they get, while a good Providence sends to

" my

" had money to buy, nor a working man time to " read the Bible; and so Christianity could only " have been a religion for the rich, for those who " had money and leisure; which blessed be God! is " so far from being the truth, that in all that fine " discourse of our Saviour to John's diciples, it is " enough to reconcile any poor man in the world to " his low condition to observe, when Christ reckons " up the things for which he came on earth, to ob- " serve, I say, what he keeps for last. *Go tell John*, says he, " *those things which ye do hear and see; the* " *blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the le-* " *pers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead* " *are raised up.* Now, sir, all these are wonders to " be sure, but they are nothing to what follows. " They are but like the lower rounds of a ladder, as " I may say, by which you mount to the top—*And* " *the poor have the gospel preached to them.* I dare " say, if John had had any doubts before, this last " part of the message must have cleared them up at " once. For it must have made him certain sure at " once, that a religion which placed preaching sal- " vation to the poor above healing the sick, which " ranked the soul above the body, and set heaven " above health, must have come from God."

" But," said Mr. Johnson, you say you can ge- " nerally pick out your particular duty from the Bi- " ble, though that immediate duty be not fully ex- " plained."

" Indeed, sir," replied the Shepherd, " I think I " can find out the principle at least, if I bring but a " willing mind. The want of that is the great hind- " rance. *Whoso doeth my will he shall know of the* " *doctrine.* You know that text, sir. I believe a " stubborn will makes the Bible harder to be under- " stood, than any want of learning. 'Tis corrupt " affections which blind the understanding, sir.

The

" The more a man hates sin, the clearer he will see " his way, and the more he loves holiness, the better " he will understand his Bible. The more practical " conviction will he get of that pleasant truth, that " *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* " Now, sir, suppose I had time and learning, and " possessed all the books I saw at the Bishop's, where " could I find out a surer way to lay the axe to the root " of all covetousness, selfishness, and injustice, than " the plain and ready rule, *to do unto all men as I* " *would they should do unto me.* If my neighbour " does me an injury can I be at any loss how to pro- " ceed with him, when I recollect the parable of the " unforgiving steward, who refused to pardon a debt " of an hundred pence, when his own ten thousand " talents had been remitted to him? I defy any man " to retain habitual selfishness, hardness of heart, or " any other allowed sin, who daily and conscientiously " tries his own heart by this touchstone. The strait " rule will shew the crooked practice to every one " who honestly tries the one by the other."

" Why you seem to make scripture a thing of ge- " neral application," said Mr. Johnson, " in cases " to which many, I fear, do not apply it."

" It applies to every thing, sir," replied the Shep- herd. " When those men who are now disturbing " the peace of the world, and trying to destroy the " confidence of God's children in their Maker and " their Saviour; when those men, I say, came " to my poor hovel with their new doctrines and " their new books, I would never look into one " of them; for I remember it was the first sin " of the first pair to lose their innocence for the " sake of a little wicked knowledge; besides, *my own* " *Book* told me—*To fear God and honour the king*— " *To meddle not with them who are given to change*— " *Not to speak evil of dignities*—*To render honour to*

" *whom*

" *whom honour is due.* So that I was furnished with " a little coat of mail, as I may say, which preserved " me, while those who had no such armour fell into " the snare."

While they were thus talking, the children who had stood very quietly behind, and had not stired a foot, now began to scamper about all at once, and in a moment ran to the window-seat to pick up their little old hats. Mr. Johnson looked surprised at this disturbance; the Shepherd asked his pardon, telling him it was the sound of the church bell which had been the cause of their rudeness; for their mother had brought them up with such a fear of being too late for church, that it was but who could catch the first stroke of the bell, and be first ready. He had always taught them to think that nothing was more indecent than to get into church after it was begun; for as the service opened with an exhortation to repentance, and a confession of sin, it looked very presumptuous not to be ready to join in it; it looked as if people did not feel themselves to be sinners. And though such as lived at a great distance might plead difference of clocks as an excuse, yet those who lived within the sound of the bell, could pretend neither ignorance nor mistake.

Mary and her children set forward. Mr. Johnson and the Shepherd followed, taking care to talk the whole way on such subjects as might fit them for the solemn duties of the place to which they were going. " I have often been sorry to observe," said Mr. Johnson, " that many who are reckoned decent, " good kind of people, and who would on no account " neglect going to church, yet seem to care but lit- " tle in what frame or temper of mind they go thi- " ther. They will talk of their worldly concerns " till they get within the door, and then take them " up again the very minute the sermon is over, which

" makes

" makes me ready to fear they lay too much stress on " the mere form of going to a place of worship. Now, " for my part, I always find that it requires a little " time to bring my mind into a state fit to do any " *common* business well, much more this great and " most necessary business of all."—" Yes, sir," replied the Shepherd ; " and then I think too how bu- " sy I should be in preparing my mind, if I was going " into the presence of a great gentleman, or a lord, " or the king ; and shall the King of kings be treat- " ed with less respect ? Besides, one likes to see peo- " ple feel as if going to church was a thing of choice " and pleasure, as well as a duty, and that they were " as desirous not to be the last there, as if they would " be if they were going to a feast, or a fair."

After service, Mr. Jenkins the clergyman, who was well acquainted with the character of Mr. Johnson, and had a great respect for him, accosted him with much civility ; expressing his concern that he could not enjoy just now so much of his conversation as he wished, as he was obliged to visit a sick person at a distance, but hoped to have a little talk with him before he left the village. As they walked along together, Mr. Johnson made such inquiries about the Shepherd, as served to confirm him in the high opinion he entertained of his piety, good sense, industry, and self-denial. They parted, the clergyman promising to call in at the cottage in his way home.

The Shepherd, who took it for granted that Mr. Johnson was gone to the parsonage, walked home with his wife and children, and was beginning in his usual way to catechise and instruct his family, when Mr. Johnson came in, and insisted that the Shepherd should go on with his instructions just as if he were not there. This gentleman, who was very desirous of being useful to his own servants and workmen in the way of religious instruction, was sometimes sorry to find

find that though he took a good deal of pains, they now and then did not quite understand him; for though his meaning was very good, his language was not always very plain; and though the *things* he said were not hard to be understood, yet the *words* were, especially to such as were very ignorant. And he now began to find out that if people were ever so wise and good, yet if they had not a simple, agreeable and familiar way of expressing themselves, some of their plain hearers would not be much the better for them. For this reason he was not above listening to the plain, humble way in which this honest man taught his family; for though he knew that he himself had many advantages over the Shepherd, had more learning, and could teach him many things, yet he was not too proud to learn even of so poor a man, in any point where he thought the Shepherd might have the advantage of him.

This gentleman was much pleased with the knowledge and piety which he discovered in the answers of the children, and desired the Shepherd to tell him how he contrived to keep up a sense of divine things in his own mind, and in that of his family, with so little leisure, and so little reading. "O! as to that, "sir," said the Shepherd, "we do not read much "except in one book to be sure; but with my hear- "ty prayer for God's blessing on the use of that book "what little knowledge is needful seems to come of "course, as it were. And my chief study has been "to bring the fruits of the Sunday reading into the "week's business, and to keep up the same sense of "God in the heart, when the Bible is in the cupboard "as when it is in the hand. In short, to apply what "I read in the book to what I meet with in the "field."

"I don't quite understand you," said Mr. Johnson. "Sir," replied the Shepherd, "I have but a poor

"gift

" gift at conveying these things to others, though I " have much comfort from them in my own mind; " but I am sure that the most ignorant and hard- " working people, who are in earnest about their " salvation, may help to keep up devout thoughts " and good affections during the week, though they " have hardly any time to look at a book; and it will " help them to keep out bad thoughts too, which " is no small matter. But then they must know the " Bible; they must have read the word of God dili- " gently; that is a kind of stock in trade for a Chris- " tian to set up with; and it is this which makes me " so careful in teaching it to my children; and even " in storing their memories with psalms and chapters. " This is a great help to a poor hard-working man, " who will scarcely meet with any thing in them but " what he may turn to some good account. If one " lives in the fear and the love of God, almost every " thing one sees abroad will teach one to adore his " power and goodness, and bring to mind some texts " of Scripture, which shall fill the heart with thank- " fulness, and the mouth with praise. When I look " upwards *the Heavens declare the glory of God*; and " shall I be silent and ungrateful? If I look round " and see the valleys standing thick with corn, how " can I help blessing that Power who *giveth me all* " *things richly to enjoy?* I may learn gratitude from " the beasts of the field, for the *ox knoweth his owner,* " *and the ass his master's crib*, and shall a Christian " not know, shall a Christian not consider what great " things God has done for him? I, who am a Shep- " herd, endeavour to fill my soul with a constant re- " membrance of that good Shepherd, who *feedeth me* " *in green pastures, and maketh me to lie down beside* " *the still waters, and whose rod and staff comfort me.* " A religion, sir, which has its seat in the heart, and " its fruits in the life, takes up little time in the study.

" And

" And yet in another sense true religion, which from " sound principle brings forth right practice, fills up " the whole time, and life too as one may say."

" You are happy," said Mr. Johnson, in this re- " tired life, by which you escape the corruptions of " the world."—" Sir," replied the Shepherd, " I " do not escape the corruptions of my own evil na- " ture. Even there, on that wild solitary hill, I " can find out that my heart is prone to evil thoughts. " I suppose, sir, that different states have different " temptations. You great folks that live in the world, " perhaps, are exposed to some, of which such a " poor man as I am, know nothing. But to one " who leads a lonely life like me, evil thoughts are " a chief besetting sin; and I can no more wit r- " stand these without the grace of God, than a rich " gentleman can withstand the snares of evil com- " pany, without the same grace. And I feel that I " stand in need of God's help continually, and if he " should give me up to my own evil heart I should " be lost."

Mr. Johnson approved of the Shepherd's sinserity, for he had always observed, that where there was no humility, and no watchfulness against sin, there was no religion, and he said that the man who did not feel himself to be a sinner, in his opinion, could not be a christian.

Just as they were in this part of their discourse, Mr. Jenkins, the clergyman, came in. After the usual salutations, he said, " Well, Shepherd, I wish " you joy; I know you will be sorry to gain any ad- " vantage by the death of a neighbour; but old " Wilson, my clerk, was so infirm, and I trust so " well prepared, that there is no reason to be sorry " for his death. I have been to pray by him, but " he died while I staid. I have always intended you " should succeed to his place; 'tis no great matter " of profit, but every little is something."

" No

"No great matter, Sir!" cried the Shepherd "indeed it is a great thing to me; it will more than "pay my rent. Blessed be God for all his good-"ness!"—Mary said nothing, but lifted up her eyes full of tears in silent gratitude.

"I am glad of this little circumstance." said Mr. Jenkins, "not only for your sake, but for the sake "of the office itself. I so heartily reverence every "religious institution, that I would never have even "the *Amen* added to the excellent prayers of our "church, by vain or profane lips, and if it depend-"ed on me, there should be no such thing in the "land as an idle, drunken, or irreligious parish clerk. "Sorry I am to say that this matter is not always "sufficiently attended to, and that I know some of "a very indifferent character."

Mr. Johnson now inquired of the clergyman whether there were many children in the parish. "More "than you would expect," replied he, "from the "seeming smallness of it; but there are some little "hamlets which you do not see."—"I think," returned Mr. Johnson, "I recollect that in the conversation "I had with the Shepherd on the hill yonder, he told "me you had no Sunday school."—"I am sorry to "say we have none," said the minister; "I do "what I can to remedy this misfortune by public "catechising; but having two or three churches to "serve, I cannot give so much time as I wish to "private instruction; and having a large family of "my own, and no assistance from others, I have "never been able to establish a school."

"There is an excellent institution in London." said Mr. Johnson, "called the Sunday-school Soci-"ety, which kindly gives books and other helps, on "the application of such pious clergymen as stand "in need of their aid, and which I am sure would "have assisted you; but I think we shall be able to

" do something ourselves. Shepherd," continued he, " if I were a king, and had it in my power to make " you a rich and a great man, with a word speak- " ing, I would not do it. Those who are raised, by " some sudden stroke, much above the station in " which Divine Providence had placed them, sel- " dom turn out very good, or very happy. I have " never had any great things in my power, but as " far as I have been able, I have been always glad to " assist the worthy. I have, however, never attemp- " ted or desired to set any poor man much above his " natural condition, but it is a pleasure to me to lend " him such assistance as may make that condition " more easy to himself, and put him in a way which " shall call him to the performance of more duties " than perhaps he could have performed without my " help, and of performing them in a better manner " to others, and with more comfort to himself.— " What rent do you pay for this cottage?"

" Fifty shillings a-year, sir."

" It is in a sad tattered condition; is there not a " better to be had in the village?"

" That in which the poor clerk lived," said the clergyman, " is not only more tight and whole, " but has two decent chambers, and a very large " light kitchen."—" That will be very convenient," replied Mr. Johnson, " pray what is the rent? —" I think," said the Shepherd, " poor neighbour " Wilson gave somewhat about four pounds a-year, " or it might be guineas."—" Very well," said Mr. Johnson, " and what will the clerk's place be worth, " think you?"—About three pounds, was the answer.

" Now," continued Mr. Johnson, " my plan is, " that the Shepherd should take that house imme- " diately; for as the poor man is dead, there will " be no need of waiting till quarter-day, if I make

" up

" up the difference."—" True, sir," said Mr. Jenkins, " and I am sure my wife's father, whom I ex-
" pect to-morrow, will willingly assist a little to-
" wards buying some of the clerk's old goods. And
" the sooner they remove the better, for poor Mary
" caught that bad rheumatism by sleeping under a
" leaky thatch." The Shepherd was too much moved to speak, and Mary could hardly sob out, " Oh,
" sir! you are too good; indeed this house will do
" very well."—" It may do very well for you and
" your children, Mary," said Mr. Johnson, gravely,
" but it will not do for a school; the kitchen is nei-
" ther large nor light enough. Shepherd," continued
" he, with your good Minister's leave, and kind
" assistance, I propose to set up in this parish a
" Sunday school, and to make you the master. It
" will not at all interfere with your weekly calling,
" and it is the only lawful way in which you could
" ... the sabbath into a day of some little profit to
" family, by doing, as I hope, a great deal of
" good to the souls of others. The rest of the
" week you will work as usual. The difference of
" rent between this house and the clerk's I shall pay
" myself, for to put you into a better house at
" your own expence would be no great act of kind-
" ness.—As for honest Mary, who is not fit for hard
" labour, or any out-of-door work, I propose to en-
" dow a small weekly school, of which she shall be
" mistress, and employ her notable turn to good ac-
" count, by teaching ten or a dozen girls to knit,
" sew, spin, card, or any other useful way of get-
" ting their bread; for all this I shall only pay
" her the usual price, for I am not going to make
" you rich but useful."

" Not rich, sir?" cried the Shepherd; How can
" I ever be thankful enough for such blessings;
" And will my poor Mary have a dry thatch over her

" head? and shall I be able to send for the doctor " when I am like to lose her? Indeed my cup runs " over with blessings, I hope God will give me hu- " mility."—Here he and Mary looked at each other and burst into tears. The gentlemen saw their distress, and kindly walked out upon the little green before the door, that these honest people might give vent to their feelings. As soon as they were alone they crept into one corner of the room, where they thought they could not be seen, and fell on their knees, devoutly blessing and praising God for his mercies. Never were more hearty prayers presented, than this grateful couple offered up for their benefactors. The warmth of their gratitude could only be equalled by the earnestness with which they besought the blessing of God on the work in which they were going to engage.

The two gentlemen now left this happy family, and walked to the parsonage, where the evening was spent in a manner very edifying to Mr. Johnson, who the next day took all proper measures for putting the Shepherd in immediate possession of his now comfortable habitation. Mr. Jenkin's father-in-law, the worthy gentleman who gave the Shepherd's wife the blankets, in the first part of this history, arrived at the parsonage before Mr. Johnson left it, and assisted in fitting up the clerk's cottage.

Mr. Johnson took his leave, promising to call on the worthy Minister and his new clerk once a year, in his summer's journey over the plain, as long as it should please God to spare his life. He had every reason to be satisfied with the objects of his bounty. The Shepherd's zeal and piety made him a blessing to the rising generation. The old resorted to his school for the benefit of hearing the young instructed; and the clergyman had the pleasure of seeing that he was rewarded for the protection he gave the school,

school, by the great increase in his congregation. The Shepherd nor only exhorted both parents and children to the indispensible duty of a regular attendance at church, but by his pious counsels he drew them thither, and by his plain and prudent instructions enabled them to understand, and of course to delight in the public worship of God.

THE

TWO SHOEMAKERS.

JACK BROWN and JAMES STOCK, were two lads apprenticed at nearly the same time, to Mr. Williams, a shoemaker, in a small town in Oxfordshire: they were pretty near the same age, but of very different characters and dispositions.

Brown was eldest son of a farmer in good circumstances, who gave the usual apprentice fee with him. Being a wild giddy boy, whom his father could not well manage or instruct in farming, he thought it better to send him out to learn a trade at a distance, than to let him idle about at home; for Jack always preferred bird's-nesting and marbles to any other employment; he would trifle away half the day, when his father thought he was at school, with any boys he could meet with, who were as idle as himself; and never could be prevailed upon to do, or to learn any thing, while a game at taw could be had for love or money. All this time, his little brothers, much younger than himself, were beginning to follow the plough, or to carry the corn to mill as soon as they were able to mount a cart-horse.

Jack, however, who was a lively boy, and did not naturally want either sense or good-nature, might have turned out well enough, if he had not had

had the misfortune to be his mothers favourite. She concealed and forgave all his faults. To be sure he was a little wild, she would say, but he would not make the worse man for that, for Jack had a good spirit of his own, and she would not have it broke, and so make a mope of the boy. The farmer, for a quiet life, as it is called, gave up all these points to his wife; and, with them, gave up the future virtue and happiness of his child. He was a laborious and industrious man, but had no religion; he thought only of the gains and advantages of the present day, and never took the future into the account. His wife managed him entirely, and as she was really notable, he did not trouble his head about any thing farther. If she had been careless in her dairy, he would have stormed and sworn; but as she only ruined one child by indulgence, and almost broke the hearts of the rest by unkindness, he gave himself little concern about the matter. The cheese, certainly, was good, and that indeed is a great point; but she was neglectful of her children, and a tyrant to her servants. Her husband's substance, indeed, was not wasted, but his happiness was not consulted. His house, it is true, was not dirty, but it was the abode of fury, ill-temper, and covetousness. And the farmer, though he did not care for liquor, was too often driven to the public-house in an evening, because his own was neither quiet nor comfortable. The mother was always scolding, and the children were always crying.

Jack, however, notwithstanding his idleness, picked up a little reading and writing, but never would learn to cast an account: that was too much labour His mother was desirous he should continue at school, not so much for the sake of his learning, which she had not sense enough to value, but to save her darling from the fatigue of labour; for if he had not gone

gone to school, she knew he must have gone to work, and she thought the former was the least tiresome of the two. Indeed this foolish woman had such an opinion of his genius, that she used, from a child, to think he was too wise for any thing but a parson, and hoped she should live to see him one. She did not wish to see her son a minister because she loved either learning or piety, but because she thought it would make Jack a gentleman, and set him above his brothers.

Farmer Brown still hoped, that though Jack was likely to make but an idle and ignorant farmer, yet he might make no bad tradesman, when he should be removed from the indulgences of a father's house, and from a silly mother, whose fondness kept him back in every thing. This woman was enraged when she found that so fine a scholar, as she took Jack to be, was to be put apprentice to a shoemaker. The farmer, however, for the first time in his life, would have his own way. But being a worldly man, and too apt to mind only what is falsely called *the main chance;* instead of being careful to look out for a sober, prudent, and religious master for his son, he left all that to accident, as if it had been a thing of little or no consequence. This is a very common fault; and fathers who are guilty of it, are in a great measure answerable for the future sins and errors of their children, when they come out into the world, and set up for themselves. If a man gives his son a good education, a good example, and a good master, it is indeed *possible* that the son may not turn out well, but it does not often happen; and when it does, the father has no blame resting on him; and it is a great point towards a man's comfort to have his conscience quiet in that respect, however God may think fit to over-rule events.

The

The farmer, however, took care to desire his friends to inquire for a shoemaker who had good business, and was a good workman; and the mother did not forget to put in her word, and desired that it might be one who was not *too strict*; for Jack had been brought up tenderly, was a meek boy, and could not bear to be contradicted in any thing. And this is the common notion of meekness among people who do not take up their notions on rational and Christian grounds.

Mr. Williams was recommended to the farmer as being the best shoemaker in the town in which he lived, and far from a strict master; and, without farther inquiries, to Mr. Williams he went.

James Stock, who was the son of an honest labourer in the next village, was bound out by the parish in consideration of his father having so numerous a family, that he was not able to put him out himself. James was in every thing the very reverse of his new companion. He was a modest, industrious, pious youth; and though so poor, and the child of a labourer, was a much better scholar than Jack, who was a wealthy farmer's son. His father had, it is true, been able to give him but very little schooling, for he was obliged to be put to work when quite a child. When very young he used to run of errands for Mr. Thomas, the curate of the parish; a very kind-hearted young gentleman, who boarded next door to his father's cottage. He used also to rub down and saddle his horse, and do any other little job for him, in the most civil obliging manner. All this so recommended him to the clergyman, that he would often send for him in of an evening, after he had done his day's work in the field, and condescended to teach him himself to write and cast accounts, as well as to instruct him in the principles of his religion. It was not merely out of kindness for the little

little good-natured services James did him, that he shewed him this favour, but also for his readiness in the catechism, and his devout behaviour at church.

The first thing that drew the minister's attention to this boy, was the following:—He had frequently given him halfpence and pence for holding his horse and carrying him to water, before he was big enough to be further useful to him. On Christmas day he was surprised to see James at church, reading out of a handsome new prayer-book; he wondered how he came by it, for he knew there was nobody in the parish likely to have given it to him, for at that time there were no Sunday schools; and the father could not afford it, he was sure.

"Well James," said he, as he saw him when they came out "you made a good figure at church to-day; "it made you look like a man and a christian, not "only to have so handsome a book, but to be so "ready in all parts of the service. How came you "by that book?" James owned modestly, that he had been a whole year saving up the money by single halfpence, all of which had been of the minister's own giving, and that in all that time he had not spent a single farthing on his own diversions. "My dear "boy," said good Mr. Thomas, "I am much mis- "taken if thou dost not turn out well in the world, "for two reasons:—first, from thy saving turn and "self-denying temper; and next, because thou "didst devote the first eighteen-pence thou wast "ever worth in the world to so good a purpose."

James bowed and blushed, and from that time Mr. Thomas began to take more notice of him, and to instruct him as I said above. As James soon grew able to do him more considerable service, he would now and then give him sixpence. This he constantly saved till it became a little sum, with which he bought shoes and stockings; well knowing that

that his poor father, with a hard family and low wages, could not buy them for him. As to what little money he earned himself by his daily labour in the field, he constantly carried it to his mother every Saturday night, to buy bread for the family, which was a pretty help to them.

As James was not over stout in his make, his father thankfully accepted the offer of the parish officers to bind out his son to a trade. This good man, however, had not, like Farmer Brown, the liberty of chusing a master for his son, or he would carefully have inquired if he was a proper man to have the care of youth; but Williams the shoemaker was already fixed on, by those who were to put the boy out, who told him if he wanted a master it must be him or none; for the overseers had a better opinion of Williams than he deserved, and thought it would be the making of the boy to go to him. The father knew that beggars must not be choosers, so he fitted out James for his new place, having indeed little to give him besides his blessing.

The worthy Mr. Thomas, however, kindly gave him an old coat and waistcoat, which his mother, who was a neat and notable woman, contrived to make up for him herself without a farthing expence, and when it was turned and made fit for his size, it made him a very handsome suit for Sundays, and lasted him a couple of years.

And here let me stop to remark what a pity it is, that poor women so seldom are able or willing to do these sort of little handy jobs themselves; and that they do not oftener bring up their daughters to be more useful in family work. They are great losers by it every way; not only as they are disqualifying their girls from making good wives hereafter, but they are losers in point of present advantage; for gentry could much oftener afford to give a poor boy a

jacket

jacket or a waistcoat, if it was not for the expence of making it, which adds very much to the cost. To my certain knowledge, many poor women would often get an old coat, or a bit of coarse new cloth given them to fit out a boy, if the mothers or sisters were known to be able to cut it out to advantage, and to make it up decently themselves. But half-a-crown for the making a bit of kersey, which costs but a few shillings, is more than many very charitable gentry can afford to give—so they often give nothing at all, when they see the mothers so little able to turn it to advantage. It is hoped they will take this hint kindly, as it is meant for their good.

But to return to our two young shoemakers. They were both now settled at Mr. Williams's, who, as he was known to be a good workman, had plenty of business. He had sometimes two or three journeymen, but no apprentices but Jack and James.

Jack, who, with all his faults, was a keen, smart boy, took to learn the trade quick enough, but the difficulty was to make him stick two hours together to his work. At every noise he heard in the street, down went the work—the last one way, the upper leather another; the sole dropped on the ground, and the thread he dragged after him, all the way up the street. If a blind fiddler, a ballad singer, a mountebank, a dancing bear, or a drum, were heard at a distance—out ran Jack—nothing could stop him, and not a stitch more could he be prevailed on to do that day. Every duty, every promise was forgotten for the present pleasure—he could not resist the smallest temptation—he never stopped for a moment to consider whether a thing was right or wrong, but whether he liked it or disliked it. And as his ill-judging mother took care to send him privately a good supply of pocket-money, that deadly bane to all youthful virtue, he had generally a few pence ready to spend, and

and to indulge in the present diversion whatever it was. And what was still worse even than spending his money, he spent his time too, or rather his master's time. Of this he was continually reminded by James, to whom he always answered, "What have "you to complain about? It is nothing to you or "any one else; I spend nobody's money but my "own."—"That may be," replied the other, "but "you cannot say it is your own time that you spend." He insisted upon it that it was; but James fetched down their indentures, and there shewed him that he had solemnly bound himself by that instrument, not to waste his master's property. "Now," quoth James, "thy own time is a very valuable part of thy "master's property." To this he replied, "Every "one's time was his own, and he should not sit mop-"ing all day over his last—for his part, he thanked "God, he was no parish 'prentice."

James did not resent this piece of foolish impertinence, as some silly lads would have done; nor fly out into a violent passion: for even at this early age, he had begun to learn of him *who was meek and lowly of heart;* and therefore *when he was reviled, he reviled not again.* On the contrary he was so very kind and gentle, that even Jack, vain and idle as he was, could not help loving him, though he took care never to follow his advice.

Jack's fondness for his boyish and silly diversions in the street, soon produced the effects which might naturally be expected; and the same idleness which led to fly out into the town at the sound of a fiddle or the sight of a puppet-show, soon led him to those places to which all these fiddles and shows naturally lead; I mean, the *ale-house.* The acquaintance picked up in the street was carried on at the Greyhound; and the idle pastimes of the boy soon led to the destructive vices of the man.

As

As he was not an ill-tempered youth, nor naturally much given to drink, a sober and prudent master, who had been steady in his management and regular in his own conduct, who would have recommended good advice by a good example, might have made something of Jack. But I am sorry to say, that Mr. Williams, though a good workman, and not a very hard or severe master, was neither a sober nor a steady man—so far from it, that he spent much more time at the Greyhound than at home. There was no order either in his shop or family. He left the chief care of the business to his two young apprentices; and being but a worldly man, he was at first disposed to shew favour to Jack much more than to James, because he had more money, and his father was better in the world than the father of poor James.

At first, therefore, he was disposed to consider James as a sort of drudge, who was to do all the menial work of the family, and he did not care how little he taught him of his trade. With Mrs. Williams the matter was still worse; she constantly called him away from the business of his trade to wash the house, nurse the child, turn the spit, or run of errands. And here I must remark, that though parish apprentices are bound in duty to be submissive to both master and mistress, and always to make themselves as useful as they can in a family, and to be civil and humble; yet on the other hand, it is the duty of masters always to remember, that if they are paid for instructing them in their trade, they ought conscientiously to instruct them in it, and not to employ them the greater part of their time in such household or other drudgery, as to deprive them of the opportunity of acquiring their trade. This practice is not the less unjust because it is common.

Mr. Williams soon found out that his favourite Jack would be of little use to him in the shop; for though he

he worked well enough, he did not care how little he did. Nor could he be of the least use to his master in keeping an account, or writing out a bill upon occasion, for as he never could be made to learn to cypher, he did not know addition from multiplication.

One day one of the customers called at the shop in a great hurry, and desired his bill might be made out that minute ; Mr. Williams, having taken a cup too much, made several attempts to put down a clear account, but the more he tried, the less he found himself able to do it. James, who was sitting at his last, rose up, and with great modesty, asked his master if he would please to give him leave to make out the bill, saying, that though but a poor scholar, he would do his best, rather than keep the gentleman waiting. Williams gladly accepted his offer, and confused as his head was with liquor, he yet was able to observe with what neatness, dispatch, and exactness, the account was drawn out. From that time he no longer considered James as a drudge, but as one fitted for the higher departments of the trade, and he was now regularly employed to manage the accounts, with which all the customers were so well pleased, that it contributed greatly to raise him in his master's esteem ; for there were now never any of those blunders or false charges for which the shop had before been so famous.

James went on in a regular course of industry, and soon became the best workman Mr. Williams had ; but there were many things in the family which he greatly disapproved. Some of the journeymen used to swear, drink, and sing very licentious songs. All these things were a great grief to his sober mind ; he complained to his master, who only laughed at him ; and indeed, as Williams did the same himself, he put it out of his own power to correct his servants, if he had

husband and father, his character as a master, and his soul as a christian to turn over a new leaf. Williams swore a great oath, that he would not be restrained in his pleasures to please a canting parish 'prentice, nor to humour a parcel of squalling brats —that let people say what they would of him, they should never say he was a *hypocrite*, and as long as they could not call him that, he did not care what else they called him.

In a violent passion he immediately went to the Greyhound, where he now spent, not only every evening, which he had long done, but good part of the day and night also. His wife was very dressy, extravagant, and fond of company, and wasted at home as fast as her husband spent abroad; so that all the neighbours said, if it had not been for James his master must have been a bankrupt long ago, but they were sure he could not hold it much longer.

As Jack Brown sung a good song, and played many diverting tricks, Williams liked his company, and often allowed him to make one at the Greyhound, where he would laugh heartily at his stories; so that every one thought Jack was much the greater favourite—so he was as a companion in frolick, and foolery, and *pleasure*, as it is called; but he would not trust him with an inch of leather or sixpence in money: No, no—when business was to be done, or trust was to be reposed, James was the man: the idle and the drunken never trust one another, if they have common sense. They like to laugh, and sing, and riot, and drink together: but when they want a friend, a counsellor, a helper in business or in trouble, they go farther a-field; and Williams, while he would drink with Jack, would trust James with untold gold; and even was foolishly tempted to neglect his business the more from knowing that he had one at home who was taking care of it.

In

In spite of all James's care and diligence, however, things were growing worse and worse: the more James saved, the more his master and mistress spent. One morning, just as the shop was opened, and James had set every body to their respective work, and he himself was settling the business for the day, he found that his master was not yet come from the Greyhound. As this was now become a common case, he only grieved but did not wonder at it. While he was indulging sad thoughts on what would be the end of all this, in ran the tapster from the Greyhound out of breath, and with a look of terror and dismay, desired James would step over to the public-house with him that moment, for that his master wanted him.

James went immediately, surprised at this unusual message. When he got into the kitchen of the public-house, which he now entered for the first time in his life, though it was just opposite the house in which he lived, he was shocked at the beastly disgusting appearance of every thing he beheld. There was a table covered with tankards, punch-bowls, broken glasses, pipes, and dirty greasy packs of cards; and all over wet with liquor; the floor was strewed with broken earthen cups, odd cards, and an EO table which had been shivered to pieces in a quarrel; behind the table stood a crowd of dirty fellows, with matted locks, hollow eyes, and faces smeared with tobacco; James made his way after the tapster, through this wretched looking crew, to a settle which stood in the chimney corner. Not a word was uttered, but the silent horror seemed to denote something more than a mere common drunken bout.

What was the dismay of James, when he saw his miserable master stretched out on the settle, in all the agonies of death! He had fallen into a fit, after having drunk hard best part of the night, and seemed

seemed to have but a few minutes to live. In his frightful countenance was displayed the dreadful picture of sin and death; for he struggled at once under the guilt of intoxication, and the pangs of a dying man. He recovered his senses for a few moments, and called out to ask if his faithful servant was come: James went up to him, took him by his cold hand, but was too much moved to speak, "Oh! James, James," cried he in a broken voice, "pray for me, comfort me." James spoke kindly to him, but was too honest to give him false comfort, as is too often done by mistaken friends in these dreadful moments.

"James," said he, "I have been a bad master to "you—you would have saved me soul and body, "but I would not let you—I have ruined my wife, "my children, and my own soul. Take warning, "oh, take warning by my miserable end," said he to his stupified companions; but none were able to attend to him but James, who bid him lift up his heart to God, and prayed heartily for him himself. "Oh!" said the dying man, "it is too late, too "late for me—but you have still time," said he to the half-drunken terrified crew around him. "Where "is Jack?" Jack Brown came forward, but was too much frightened to speak. "O wretched boy!" said he, "I fear I shall have the ruin of thy soul, as "well as my own, to answer for. Stop short!—Take "warning—now, in the days of thy youth. O "James, James, thou dost not pray for me. Death "is dreadful to the wicked—O the sting of death to "a guilty conscience!" Here he lifted up his ghastly eyes in speechless horror, grasped hard the hand of James, gave a deep hollow groan, and closed his eyes never to open them but in an awful eternity.

This

This was death in all its horrors! The gay companions of his sinful pleasures could not stand the sight; all slunk away like guilty thieves from their late favourite friend—no one was left to assist him, but his two apprentices. Brown was not so hardened but that he shed many tears for his unhappy master; and even made some hasty resolutions of amendment, which were too soon forgotten.

While Brown stepped home to call the workmen to come and assist in removing their poor master, James staid alone with the corpse, and employed those awful moments in indulging the most serious thoughts, and praying heartily to God, that so terrible a lesson might not be thrown away upon him; but that he might be enabled to live in a constant state of preparation for death. The resolutions he made at this moment, as they were not made in his own strength, but in an humble reliance on God's gracious help, were of use to him as long as he lived; and if ever he was for a moment tempted to say, or do a wrong thing, the remembrance of his poor dying master's last agonies, and the dreadful words he uttered, always operated as an instant check upon him.

When Williams was buried, and his affairs came to be inquired into, they were found to be in a sad condition. His wife, indeed, was the less to be pitied, as she had contributed her full share to the common ruin. James, however, did pity her, and by his skill in accounts, his known honesty, and the trust the creditors put in his word, things came to be settled rather better than Mrs. Williams expected.

Both Brown and James were now within a month or two of being out of their time. The creditors, as was said before, employed James to settle his late master's accounts, which he did in a manner so creditable to his abilities, and his honesty, that they proposed

posed to him to take the shop himself. He assured them it was utterly out of his power for want of money. As the creditors had not the least fear of being repaid, if it should please God to spare his life, they generously agreed among themselves, to advance him a small sum of money without any security but his bond; for this he was to pay a very reasonable interest, and to return the whole in a given number of years. James shed tears of gratitude at this testimony to his character, and could hardly be prevailed on to accept their kindness, so great was his dread of being in debt.

He took the remainder of the lease from his mistress; and, in settling affairs with her, took care to make every thing as advantageous to her as possible. He never once allowed himself to think how unkind she had been to him; he only saw in her the needy widow of his deceased master, and the distressed mother of an infant family; and was heartily sorry it was not in his power to contribute to their support; it was not only James's duty, but his delight, to return good for evil—for he was a Christian.

James Stock was now, by the blessing of God on his own earnest endeavours, master of a considerable shop, and was respected by the whole town for his prudence, honesty, and piety. How he behaved in his new station, and also what befel his comrade Brown, must be the subject of another book; and I hope my readers will look forward with some impatience for some further account of this worthy young man. In the mean time, other apprentices will do well to follow so praise-worthy an example, and to remember, that the respectable master of a large shop and a profitable business, was raised to that creditable situation, without money, friends, or connections, from the low beginning of a parish apprentice,

tice, by sobriety, industry, the fear of God, and an obedience to the divine principles of the Christian religion.

PART II.

The Apprentice turned Master.

THE first part of this history left off with the dreadful sudden death of Williams the idle shoemaker, who died in a drunken fit at the Greyhound. It also shewed how James Stock, his faithful apprentice, by his honest and upright behaviour, so gained the love and respect of his late master's creditors, that they set him up in business, though he was not worth a shilling of his own, such is the power of a good character! And when we last parted from him he had just got possession of his master's shop.

This sudden prosperity was a time of trial for James; who, as he was now become a creditable tradesman, I shall hereafter think proper to call Mr. James Stock. I say, this sudden rise in life was a time of trial; for we hardly know what we are ourselves till we become our own masters. There is indeed always a reasonable hope that a good servant will not make a bad master, and that a faithful apprentice will prove an honest tradesman. But the heart of man is deceitful; and some folks who seem to behave very well while they are under subjection, no sooner get a little power than their heads are turned,

ed, and they grow prouder than those who are gentlemen born. They forget at once that they were lately poor and dependent themselves, so that one would think that with their poverty they had lost their memory too. I have known some who had suffered most hardships in their early days, become the most hard and oppressive in their turn; so that they seem to forget that fine considerate reason which God gives to the children of Israel why they should be merciful to their servants, *remembering*, saith he, *that thou thyself wast a bondman.*

Young Mr. Stock did not so forget himself. He had indeed the only sure guard from falling into this error. It was not from any easiness in his natural disposition: for that only just serves to make folks good-natured when they are pleased, and patient when they have nothing to vex them. James went upon higher ground. He brought his religion into all his actions; he did not give way to abusive language, because he knew it was a sin. He did not use his apprentices ill, because he knew he had himself a Master in heaven.

He knew he owed his present happy situation to the kindness of the creditors. But did he grow easy and careless because he knew he had such friends? No indeed. He worked with double diligence in order to get out of debt, and to let these friends see he did not abuse their kindness. Such behaviour as this is the greatest encouragement in the world to rich people to lend a little money. It creates friends, and it keeps them.

His shoes and boots were made in the best manner; this *got* him business; he set out with a rule to tell no lies and deceive no customers; this *secured* his business. He had two reasons for not promising to send home goods when he knew he should not be able to keep his word. The first, because he knew a lie was

was a sin, the next, because it was a folly. There is no credit sooner worn out than that which is gained by false pretences. After a little while no one is deceived by them. Falsehood is so soon detected that I believe most tradesmen are the poorer for it in the long run. Deceit is the worst part of a shopkeeper's stock in trade.

James was now at the head of a family. This is a serious situation (said he to himself, one fine summer's evening, as he stood leaning over the half door of his shop to enjoy a little fresh air); I am now master of a family. My cares are doubled, and so are my duties. I see the higher one gets in life the more one has to answer for. Let me now call to mind the sorrow I used to feel when I was made to carry work home on a Sunday by an ungodly master; and let me now *keep* the resolutions I then formed.

So what his heart found right to do he resolved to do quickly; and he set out at first as he meant to go on. The Sunday was truly a day of rest at Mr. Stock's. He would not allow a pair of shoes to be given out on that day to oblige the best customer he had. And what did he lose by it? Why nothing. For when the people were once used to it, they liked Saturday night just as well. But had it been otherwise he would have given up his gains to his conscience.

Shewing how Mr. Stock behaved to his Apprentices.

When he got up in the world so far as to have apprentices, he thought himself as accountable for their behaviour as if they had been his children. He was very kind to them, and had a cheerful merry way of talking to them, so that the lads who had seen too much

only shews their ignorance. It is not true. That good man St. Paul knew better*. And when men do not own their sins, it is not because there is no sin in their hearts, but because they are not anxious to search for it, nor humble to confess it, nor penitent to mourn over it. But this was not the case with James Stock. "Examine yourselves truly," said he, "is no bad part of the catechism." He began to be afraid that his desire of living creditably, and without being a burthen to any one, might, under the mask of honesty and independance, lead him into pride and covetousness. He feared that the bias of his heart lay that way. So instead of being proud of his sobriety; instead of bragging that he never spent his money idly, nor went to the ale-house; instead of boasting how hard he worked, and how he denied himself, he strove in secret that even these good qualities might not grow out of a wrong root. The following event was of use to him in the way of indulging any disposition to covetousness:

One evening as he was standing at the door of his shop, a poor dirty boy, without stockings and shoes, came up and asked him for a bit of broken victuals, for he had eaten nothing all day. In spite of his dirt and rags he was a very pretty, lively, civil spoken boy, and Mr. Stock could not help thinking he knew something of his face. He fetched him out a good piece of bread and cheese, and while the boy was devouring it, asked him if he had no parents, and why he went about in that vagabond manner; "Daddy has been dead some years," said the boy? "he died in a fit over at the Greyhound. Mam-"my," says he, "used to live at this shop, and "then we did not want for clothes nor victuals nei-"ther." Stock was melted almost to tears on finding that this dirty beggar-boy was Tommy Williams, the

* See Roman, vii.

son

son of his old master. He blessed God on comparing his own happy condition with that of this poor destitude child, but he was not proud at the comparison; and while he was thankful for his own prosperity, he pitied the helpless boy. "Where have "you been living of late?" said he to him, "for "I understood you all went home to your mother's "friends."—"So we did, sir," said the boy, "but "they are grown tired of maintaining us, because "they said that mammy spent all the money which "should have gone to buy victuals for us, on snuff "and drams. And so they have sent us back to this "place, which is daddy's parish."

"And where do you live here?" said Mr. Stock. "O sir, we are all put into the parish poor-house."—"And does your mother do any thing to help to "maintain you?"—"No, sir, for mammy says she "was not brought up to work like poor folks, and "she would rather starve than spin or knit; so she "lies a-bed all the morning, and sends us about to "pick up what we can, a bit of victuals or a few "half-pence."—"And have you any money in "your pocket now?"—"Yes, sir, I have got three "half-pence which I have begged to-day."—"Then, "as you were so very hungry, how came you not "to buy a roll at that baker's over the way?"—"Because, sir, I was going to lay it out in tea for "mammy, for I never lay out a farthing for myself. "Indeed mammy says she *will* have her tea twice "a-day if we beg or starve for it."—"Can you "read, my boy?" said Mr. Stock:—A little, sir, "and say my prayers too."—"And can you say "your catechism?"—"I have almost forgotten it "all, sir, though I remember something about *ho-* "*nouring my father and mother*, and that makes me "still carry the halfpence home to mammy instead "of buying cakes."—"Who taught you these good things?"

" things?"—" One Jemmy Stock, sir, who was a " parish 'prentice to my daddy. He taught me one " question out of the catechism every night, and " always made me say my prayers to him before " I went to bed. He told me I should go to the " wicked place if I did not fear God, so I am still " afraid to tell lies like the other boys. Poor Jemmy " gave me a piece of gingerbread every time I learnt " well; but I have no friend now; Jemmy was ve- " ry good to me, though mammy did nothing but " beat him."

Mr. Stock was too much moved to carry on the discourse; he did not make himself known to the boy, but took him over to the baker's shop; as they walked along he could not help repeating aloud a verse or two of that beautiful hymn, so deservedly the favourite of all children:

" Not more than others I deserve,
" Yet God hath given me more;
" For I have food while others starve,
" Or beg from door to door."

The little boy looked up in his face, saying, " Why, sir, that's the very hymn which Jemmy " Stock gave me a penny for learning," Stock made no answer, but put a couple of threepenny loaves into his hand to carry home, and told him to call on him again at such a time in the following week.

How Mr. Stock contrived to be charitable without any Expence.

STOCK had abundant subject for meditation that night. He was puzzled what to do with the boy. While he was carrying on his trade upon borrowed money,

money, he did not think it right to give any part of that money to assist the idle, or even to help the distressed. "I must be just," said he, before I am "generous." Still he could not bear to see this fine boy given up to certain ruin. He did not think it safe to take him into his shop in his present ignorant unprincipled state. At last he hit upon this thought: I work for myself twelve hours in the day. Why shall I not work one hour or two for this boy in the evening? It will be but for a year, and I shall then have more right to do what I please. My money will then be my own, I shall have paid my debts.

So he began to put his resolution in practice that very night, sticking to his old notion of not putting off till to-morrow what should be done to day; and it was thought he owed much of his success in life, as well as his growth in goodness, to this little saying. "I am young and healthy," said he, "one "hour's work more will do me no harm; I will set "aside all I get by these over-hours, and put the boy "to school. I have not only no right to punish this "child for the sins of his father, but I consider that "though God hated those sins, he has made them be "instrumental to my advancement."

Tommy Williams called at the time appointed. In the meantime Mr. Stock's maid had made him a neat little suit of clothes out of an old coat of her master's. She had also knit him a pair of stockings, and Mr. Stock made him sit down in the shop, while he himself fitted him with a pair of new shoes. The maid having washed and dressed him, Mr. Stock took him by the hand, and walked along with him to the parish poor-house to find his mother. They found her dressed in ragged filthy finery, standing at the door, where she passed most of her time, quarrelling with half a dozen women as idle and dirty as herself. When she saw Tommy so neat and well-dressed, she fell a crying for joy. She said "it put her in mind of "old

"old times, for Tommy always used to be dressed "like a gentleman."—"So much the worse," said Mr. Stock; "if you had not begun by making him "look like a gentleman, you needed not have end- "ed by making him look like a beggar."—"Oh "Jem!" said she, (for though it was four years since she had seen him, she soon recollected him,) "fine "times for you! set a beggar on horseback—you "know the proverb. I shall beat Tommy well for "finding you out, and exposing me to you.

Instead of entering into any dispute with this bad woman, or praising himself at her expence; instead of putting her in mind of her past ill behaviour to him, or reproaching her with the bad use she had made of her prosperity, he mildly said to her,— "Mrs. Williams, I am sorry for your misfortunes; I "am come to relieve you of part of your burthen. "I will take Tommy off your hands. I will give "him a year's board and schooling, and by that time "I shall see what he is fit for. I will promise no- "thing, but if the boy turns out well I will never for- "sake him. I shall make but one bargain with you, "which is, that he must not come to this place to "hear all this railing and swearing, nor shall he "keep company with these pilfering idle children. "You are welcome to go and see him when you "please, but here he must not come."

The foolish woman burst out a-crying, saying, "she should lose her poor dear "Tommy for ever. "Mr. Stock might give *her* the money he intended "to pay at the school, for nobody could do so well "by him as his own mother." The truth was, she wanted to get these new clothes into her clutches, which would all have been pawned at the dram shop before the week was out. This Mr. Stock well knew. From crying she fell to scolding and swearing. She told him he was an unnatural wretch, that wanted to make

make a child despise his own mother because she was poor. She even went so far as to say she would not part from him; she said she hated your godly people, they had no bowels of compassion, but tried to set men, women, and children against their own flesh and blood.

Mr. Stock now almost lost his patience, and for one moment a thought came across him, to strip the boy, carry back the clothes, and leave him to his unnatural mother. "Why," said he, "should I work over-"hours, and wear out my strength for this wicked "woman?" But he soon checked this thought, by reflecting on the patience and long-suffering of God with rebellious sinners. This cured his anger in a moment, and he mildly reasoned with her on her folly and blindness in opposing the good of her child.

One of the neighbours who stood by said, "What "a fine thing it was for the boy! but some people "were born to be lucky. She wished Mr. Stock "would take a fancy to *her* child, he should have "him soon enough." Mrs. Williams now began to be frightened lest Mr. Stock should take the woman at her word, and sullenly consented to let the boy go, from envy and malice, not from prudence and gratitude; and Tommy was sent to school that very night, his mother crying and roaring, instead of thanking God for such a blessing.

And here I cannot forbear telling a very good-natured thing of Will Simpson, one of the workmen.—By-the-bye it was that very young fellow who was reformed by Stock's good example when he was an apprentice, and who used to sing psalms with him on a Sunday evening when they got out of the way of "Williams's junketing. Will coming home early one evening, was surprised to find his master at work by himself, long after the usual time. He begged so

heartily to know the reason, that Stock owned the truth. Will was so struck with this piece of kindness, that he snatched up a last, crying out, "Well, mas-"ter, you shall not work by yourself, however; we "will go snacks in maintaining Tommy: it shall ne-"ver be said that Will Simpson was idling about, "when his master was working for charity." This made the hour pass chearfully, and doubled the profits.

In a year or two Mr. Stock, by God's blessing on his labours, became quite clear of the world. He now paid off his creditors; but he never forgot his obligation to them, and found many opportunities of shewing kindness to them, and to their children after them. He now cast about for a proper wife, and as he was thought a prosperous man, and was very well looking besides, most of the smart girls of the place, with their tawdry finery, used to be often parading before the shop, and would even go to church in order to put themselves in his way. But Mr. Stock when he went to church had other things in his head; and if ever he thought about these gay damsels at all, it was with concern in seeing them so improperly tricked out, so that the very means they took to please him made him dislike them.

There was one Betsy West, a young woman of excellent character and very modest appearance. He had seldom seen her out, as she was employed night and day in waiting on an aged widowed mother who was both lame and blind. This good girl was indeed almost literally eyes and feet to her helpless parent, and Mr. Stock used to see her, through the little casement window, lifting her up and feeding her with a tenderness which greatly raised his esteem for her. He used to tell Will Simpson, as they sat at work, that such a dutiful daughter could hardly fail to make a faithful wife. He had not, however, the heart to

try

try to draw her off from her care of her sick mother. The poor woman declined very fast. Betsy was much employed in reading or praying by her while she was awake, and passed good part of the night while she slept, in doing some fine works to sell in order to supply her sick mother with little delicacies which their poor pittance could not afford, while she herself lived on a crust.

Mr. Stock knew that Betsy would have little or nothing after her mother's death, as she had only a life income. On the other hand Mr. Thompson, the tanner, had offered him two hundred pounds with his daughter Nancy: but he was almost sorry that he had not in this case an opportunity of resisting his natural bias, which rather lay on the side of loving money: "For," said he, "putting prin-
"ciple and putting affection out of the question, I
"shall do a more *prudent* thing by marrying Betsy
"West, who will conform to her station, and is a
"religious, humble, industrious girl, without a shil-
"ling, than by having an idle dressy lass, who will
"neglect my family and fill my house with com-
"pany, though she should have twice the fortune
"which Nancy Thompson would bring."

At length poor old Mrs. West was released from all her sufferings. At a proper time Mr. Stock proposed marriage to Betsy, and was accepted. All the disappointed girls in the town wondered what any body could like in such a dowdy as that. Had the man no eyes? They thought Mr. Stock had had more taste. Oh! how it did provoke all the vain idle things to find, that staying at home, dressing plainly, serving God, and nursing a blind mother, should do that for Betsy West, which all their contrivances, flaunting, and dancing, could not do for them.

He was not disappointed in his hope of meeting with a good wife in Betsy, as indeed those who marry

on right grounds seldom are. But if religious persons will, for the sake of money, chuse partners for life who have no religion, do not let them complain that they are unhappy; they might have known that before hand.

Tommy Williams was now taken home to Stock's house and bound apprentice. He was always kind and attentive to his mother; and every penny which Will Simpson or his master gave him for learning a chapter, he would save to buy a bit of tea and sugar for her. When the other boys laughed at him for being so foolish as to deny himself cakes and apples, to give his money to her who was so bad a woman, he would answer, "It may be so, but she is my "mother for all that."

Mr. Stock was much moved at the change in this boy, who turned out a very good youth. He resolved, as God should prosper him, that he would try to snatch other helpless creatures ftom sin and ruin. "For," said he, "it is owing to God's blessing on "the instructions of my good minister when I was a "child, that I have been saved from the broad way "of destruction." He still gave God the glory of every thing he did aright; and when Will Simpson one day said to him. "Master, I wish I were half "as good as you are."—"Hold, William," answered he gravely, "I once read in a book, that the "devil is willing enough we should appear to do "good actions, if he can but make us proud of "them."

But we must not forget our other old acquaintance, Mr. Stock's fellow-prentice. So next month you may expect a full account of the many tricks and frolicks of idle Jack Brown.

PART

PART III.

Some Account of the Frolicks of idle Jack Brown.

You shall now hear what befel idle Jack Brown, who, being a farmer's son, had many advantages to begin life with. But he who wants prudence may be said to want every thing, because he turns all his advantages to no account.

Jack Brown was just out of his time when his master Williams died in that terrible drunken fit at the Greyhound. You know already how Stock succeeded to his master's business, and prospered in it. Jack wished very much to enter into partnership with him. His father and mother too were desirous of it, and offered to advance a hundred pounds with him. Here is a fresh proof of the power of character! The old farmer, with all his covetousness, was eager to get his son into partnership with Stock, though the latter was not worth a shilling; and even Jack's mother, with all her pride, was eager for it, for they had both sense enough to see it would be the making of Jack. The father knew that Stock would look to the main chance; and the mother, that he would take the labouring oar, and so her darling would have little to do. The ruling passion operated in both. One parent wished to secure to the son a life of pleasure, the other a profitable trade. Both were equally indifferent to whatever related to his eternal good.

Stock,

derstand, for her part, why such beggars must become tradesmen; it was making a velvet purse of a sow's ear.

Stock, however, set out on quite another set of principles. He did not allow himself to square his own behaviour to others by theirs to him. He seldom asked himself what he should *like* to do: but he had a mighty way of saying, I wonder now what is my *duty* to do? And when he was once clear in that matter he generally did it, always begging God's blessing and direction. So instead of setting Brown at defiance; instead of all that vulgar selfishness, of catch he that catch can—and two of a trade can never agree—he resolved to be friendly towards him. Instead of joining in the laugh against Brown for making his house so fine, he was sorry for him, because he feared he would never be able to pay such a rent. He very kindly called upon him, told him there was business enough for them both, and gave him many useful hints for his going on. He warned him to go oftener to church and seldomer to the Greyhound: put him in mind how following the one and forsaking the other had been the ruin of their poor master, and added the following

ADVICE TO YOUNG TRADESMEN.

Buy the best goods; cut the work out yourself; let the eye of the master be every where; employ the soberest men; avoid all the low deceits of trade; never lower the credit of another to raise your own; make short payments; keep exact accounts; avoid idle company, and be very strict to your word.

For a short time things went on swimmingly. Brown was merry and civil. The shop was well situated for gossiping; and every one who had something

thing to say, and nothing to do, was welcome. Every idle story was first spread, and every idle song first sung, in Brown's shop. Every customer who came to be measured was promised that his shoes should be done first. But the misfortune was, if twenty came in a day the same promise was made to all; so that nineteen were disappointed, and of course affronted. He never said *No* to any one. It is indeed a word which it requires some honesty to pronounce. By all these false promises he was thought the most obliging fellow that ever made a shoe. And as he set out on the principle of underselling, people took a mighty fancy to the cheap shop. And it was agreed among all the young and giddy, that he would beat Stock hollow, and that the old shop would be soon knocked up.

All is not gold that glistens.

After a few months, however, folks began to be not quite so fond of the cheap shop; one found out that the leather was bad, another that the work was slight. Those who liked substantial goods went all of them to Stock's, for they said Brown's heel taps did not last a week; his new boots let in water; and they believed he made his soles of brown paper. Besides, it was thought by most, that his promising all, and keeping his word with none, hurt his business as much as any thing. Indeed, I question, putting religion out of the question, if lying ever answers, even in a political view.

Brown had what is commonly called *a good heart*; that is, he had a thoughtless good nature, and a sort of feeling for the moment which made him seem sorry when others were in trouble. But he was not apt to put himself to any inconvenience, nor go a step

step out of his way, nor give up any pleasure to serve the best friend he had. He loved *fun*; and those who do should always see that it be harmless, and that they do not give up more for it than it is worth. I am not going to say a word against innocent merriment. I like it myself. But what the proverb says of gold, may be said of mirth; it may be bought too dear. If a young man finds that what he fancies is a good joke may possibly offend God, hurt his neighbour, afflict his parent, or make a modest girl blush, let him then be assured it is not fun but wickedness, and he had better let it alone.

Jack Brown then, as *good a heart* as he had, did not know what it was to deny himself any thing. He was so *good-natured* indeed, that he never in his life refused to make one of a jolly set; but he was not good-natured enough to consider that those men whom he kept up all night roaring and laughing, had wives and children at home, who had little to eat, and less to wear, because *they* were keeping up the character of merry fellows and good hearts at the public-house.

The Mountebank.

One day he saw his father's plough boy come galloping up to his door in great haste. This boy brought Brown word that his mother was dangerously ill, and that his father had sent his own best bay mare Smiler, that his son might lose no time, but set out directly to see his mother before she died. Jack burst into tears, lamented the danger of so fond a mother, and all the people in the shop extolled his *good heart*.

He sent back the boy directly, with a message that he would follow him in half an hour, as soon as the mare had baited; for he well knew that his father would not thank him for any haste he might make if Smiler was hurt.

Jack

Jack accordingly set off, and rode with such speed to the next town, that both himself and Smiler had a mind to another bait. They stopped at the Star, unluckily it was fair-day, and as he was walking about while Smiler was eating her oats, a bill was put into his hand setting forth, that on a stage opposite the Globe a mountebank was showing away, and his Andrew performing the finest tricks that ever were seen. He read—he stood still—he went on—" It " will not hinder me," says he; " Smiler must rest; " and I shall see my poor dear mother quite as soon " if I just take a peep, as if I sit moping at the " Star."

The tricks were so merry that the time seemed short, and when they were over he could not forbear going into the Globe and treating these choice spirits with a bowl of punch. Just as they were taking the last glass Jack happened to say that he was the best fives player in the country. " That is lucky," said the Andrew, " for there is a famous match now play- " ing in the court, and you may never again have " such an opportunity to show your skill." Brown declared " he could not stay, for that he had left his " horse at the Star, and must set off on urgent busi- " ness." They now all pretended to call his skill in question. This roused his pride, and he thought another half hour could break no squares. Smiler had now had a good feed of corn, and he would only have to push her on a little more; so to it he went.

He won the first game. This spurred him on; and he played till it was so dark they could not see a ball. Another bowl was called for from the winner. Wagers and betts now drained Brown not only of all the money he had won, but of all he had in his pocket, so that he was obliged to ask leave to go to the house where his horse was, to borrow enough to discharge his reckoning at the Globe.

All

All these losses brought his poor dear mother to his mind, and he marched off with rather a heavy heart to borrow the money, and to order Smiler out of the stable. The landlord expressed much surprise at seeing him, and the ostler declared there was no Smiler there; that he had been rode off above two hours ago by the Merry Andrew, who said he came by order of the owner, Mr. Brown, to fetch him to the Globe, and to pay for his feed. It was indeed one of the neatest tricks the Andrew ever performed, for he made such a clean conveyance of Smiler, that neither Jack nor his father ever heard of her again.

It was night: no one could tell what road the Andrew took, and it was another hour or two before an advertisement could be drawn up for apprehending the horse stealer. Jack had some doubts whether he should go on or return back. He knew that though his father might fear his wife most, yet he loved Smiler best. At length he took that courage from a glass of brandy which he ought to have taken from a hearty repentance, and he resolved to pursue his journey.—He was obliged to leave his watch and silver buckles in pawn for a little old hack which was nothing but skin and bone, and would hardly trot three miles an hour.

He knocked at his father's door about five in the morning. The family were all up. He asked the boy who opened the door how his mother was? "She "is dead," said the boy; "she died yesterday af-"ternoon." Here Jack's heart smote him, and he cried aloud, partly from grief, but more from the reproaches of his own conscience, for he found by computing the hours, that he had come strait on, he should have been in time to receive his mother's blessing.

The father now called from within, "I hear Smi-"ler's step. Is Jack come?"—Yes, father," said Jack,

Jack, in a low voice. "Then," cried the farmer, "run every man and boy of you and take care of the "mare. Tom, do thou go and rub her down; Jem, "run and get her a good feed of corn. Be sure "walk her about that she may not catch cold."— Young Brown came in. "Are you not an undutiful "dog?" said the father; "you might have been "here twelve hours ago. Your mother could not die "in peace without seeing you. She said it was a "cruel return for all her fondness that you could not "make a little haste to see her; but it was always "so, for she had wronged her other children to help "you, and this was her reward." Brown sobbed "out a few words, but his father replied, "Never "cry Jack, for the boy told me that it was out of re- "gard for Smiler that you were not here as soon as "he was; and if 'twas your over care of her, why "there's no great harm done. You could not have "saved your poor mother, and you might have hurt "the mare." Here Jack's double guilt flew into his face. He knew that his father was very covetous, and had lived on bad terms with his wife; and also that his own unkindness to her had been forgiven by him out of love to the horse; but to break to him how he had lost that horse through his own folly and want of feeling, was more than Jack had courage to do. The old man, however, soon got at the truth, and no words can describe his fury. Forgetting that his wife lay dead above stairs, he abused his son in a way not fit to be repeated; and though his covetousness had just before found an excuse for a favourite son neglecting to visit a dying parent, yet he now vented his rage against Jack as an unnatural brute, whom he would cut off with a shilling, and bade him never see his face again.

Jack was not allowed to attend his mother's funeral, which was a real grief to him; nor would his father

ther advance even the little money which was needful to redeem his things at the Star. He had now no fond mother to assist him, and he set out on his return home on his borrowed hack, full of grief. He had the added mortification of knowing, that he had also lost by his folly a little hoard of money which his mother had saved up for him.

When Brown got back to his own town he found that the story of Smiler and the Andrew had got thither before him, and it was thought a very good joke at the Greyhound. He soon recovered his spirits as far as related to the horse, but as to his behaviour to his dying mother it troubled him at times to the last day of his life, though he did all he could to forget it. He did not however go on at all better, nor did he engage in one frolick the less for what had passed at the Globe; his *good heart* continually betraying him into acts of levity and vanity.

Jack began at length to feel the reverse of that proverb, *Keep your shop and your shop will keep you.* He had neglected his customers, and they forsook him. Quarter day came round; there was much to pay and little to receive. He owed two years' rent. He was in arrears to his men for wages. He had a long account with his currier. It was in vain to apply to his father. He had now no mother. Stock was the only true friend he had in the world, and had helped him out of many petty scrapes, but he knew Stock would advance no money in so hopeless a case. Duns came fast about him. He named a speedy day for payment; but as soon as they were out of the house, and the danger put off to a little distance, he forgot every promise, was as merry as ever, and run the same round of thoughtless gaiety. Whenever he was in trouble Stock did not shun him, because that was the moment to throw in a little good advice. He

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one day asked him if he always intended to go on in this course? "No," said he, "I am resolved by-"and bye to reform, grow sober, and go to church. "Why I am but five and twenty, man, I am stout "and healthy, and likely to live long; I can repent, "and grow melancholy and good at any time."

"Oh Jack!" said Stock, "don't cheat thyself "with that false hope. What thou dost intend to "do, do quickly. Did'st thou never read about the "heart growing hardened by long indulgence in sin? "Some folk, who pretend to mean well, show that "they mean nothing at all, by never beginning to "put their good resolutions into practice; which "made a wise man once say, that hell is paved with "good intentions. We cannot repent when we "please. *It is the goodness of God which leadeth us "to repentance.*"

"I am sure," replied Jack, "I am no one's ene-"my but my own."

"It is as foolish," said Stock, "to say a bad man "is no one's enemy but his own, as that a good man "is no one's friend but his own. There is no such "neutral character. A bad man corrupts or offends "all within reach of his example, just as a good man "benefits or instructs all within the sphere of his in-"fluence. And there is no time when we can say "that this transmitted good and evil will end. A "wicked man may be punished for sins he never "committed himself, if he has been the cause of sin "in others, as surely as a saint will be rewarded for "more good deeds than he himself has done, even "for the virtues and good actions of all those who "are made better by his instruction, his example, "or his writings."

Michaelmas-day was at hand. The landlord declared he would be put off no longer, but would seize for rent if it was not paid him on that day, as well

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as for a considerable sum due to him for leather. Brown at last began to be frightened. He applied to Stock to be bound for him. This Stock flatly refused. Brown now began to dread the horrors of a jail, and really seemed so very contrite, and made so many vows and promises of amendment, that at length Stock was prevailed on, together with two or three of Brown's other friends, to advance each a small sum of money to quiet the landlord, Brown promising to make over to them every part of his stock, and to be guided in future by their advice, declaring that he would turn over a new leaf, and follow Mr. Stock's example, as well as his direction in every thing.

Stock's good-nature was at last wrought upon, and he raised the money. The truth is, he did not know the worst, nor how deeply Brown was involved. Brown joyfully set out on the very quarter-day to a town at some distance to carry his landlord this money, raised by the imprudent kindness of his friend. At his departure Stock put him in mind of the old story of Smiler and the Merry Andrew, and he promised of his own head that he would not even call at a public-house till he had paid the money.

He was as good as his word. He very triumphantly passed by several. He stopped a little under the window of one where the sounds of merriment and loud laughter caught his ear. At another he heard the enticing notes of a fiddle and the light heels of the merry dancers. Here his heart had well nigh failed him, but the dread of a jail on the one hand, and what he feared almost as much, Mr. Stock's anger on the other, spurred him on; and he valued himself not a little at having got the better of this temptation. He felt quite happy when he found he had reached the door of his landlord without having yielded to one idle inclination.

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He knocked at the door. The maid who opened it said her master was not at home. "I am sorry "for it," said he, strutting about; and with a boasting air he took out his money. "I want to pay him "my rent: he needed not to have been afraid of "*me*." The servant, who knew her master was very much afraid of him, desired him to walk in, for her master would be at home in half an hour. "I "will call again," said he; "but no, let him call "on me, and the sooner the better: I shall be at "the Blue Posts." While he had been talking he took care to open his black leather case, and to display the bank bills to the servant, and then, in a swaggering way, he put up his money and marched off to the Blue Posts.

He was by this time quite proud of his own resolution, and having tendered the money, and being clear in his own mind that it was the landlord's own fault and not his, that it was not paid, he went to refresh himself at the Blue Posts. In a barn belonging to this public-house a set of strollers were just going to perform some of that sing-song ribaldry by which our villages are corrupted, the laws broken, and that money drawn from the poor for pleasure, which is wanted by their families for bread. The name of the last new song which made part of the entertainment, made him think himself in high luck, that he should have just that half hour to spare. He went into the barn, but was too much delighted with the actor, who sung his favourite song, to remain a quiet hearer. He leaped out of the pit, and got behind the two ragged blankets which served for a curtain. He sung so much better than the actors themselves, that they praised and admired him to a degree which awakened all his vanity. He was so intoxicated with their flattery, that he could do no less than invite them all to supper, an invitation which they were too hungry not to accept.

He did not, however, quite forget his appointment with his landlord; but the half hour was long since past by. "And so," says he, "as I know he is a "mean curmudgeon, who goes to bed I suppose by "day-light to save candle, it will be too late to "speak with him to-night; besides, let him call up-"on me; it is his business and not mine. I left "word where I was to be found; the money is rea-"dy, and if I don't pay him to-night, I can do it "before breakfast."

By the time these firm resolutions were made, supper was ready. There never was a more jolly evening. Ale and punch were as plenty as water. The actors saw what a vain fellow was feasting them; and as they wanted victuals, and he wanted flattery, the business was soon settled. They ate, and Brown sung. They pretended to be in raptures. Singing promoted drinking, and every fresh glass produced a song, or a story still more merry than the former. Before morning the players who were engaged to act in another barn a dozen milesoff, stole away quietly. Brown having dropt asleep they left him to finish his nap by himself. As to him his dreams were gay and pleasant, and the house being quite still, he slept comfortably till morning.

As soon as he had breakfasted, the business of the night before popped into his head. He set off once more to his landlord's in high spirits, gaily singing by the way scraps of all the tunes he had picked up the night before from his new friends. The landlord opened the door himself, and reproached him with no small surliness for not having kept his word with him the evening before, adding, that he supposed he was come now with some more of his shallow excuses. Brown put on all that haughtiness which is common to people who being generally apt to be in the wrong, happen to catch themselves doing a right action;

tion; he looked big, as some sort of people do when they have money to pay. "You need not have been "so anxious about your money," said he, "I was "not going to break or run away." The landlord well knew this was the common language of those who are ready to do both. Brown haughtily added, "You shall see I am a man of my word; give me a "receipt." The landlord had it ready and gave it him.

Brown put his hand in his pocket for his black leather case in which the bills were; he felt, he searched, he examined, first one pocket, then the other; then both waistcoat pockets, but no leather case could he find. He looked terrified. It was indeed the face of real terror, but the landlord conceived it to be that of guilt, and abused him heartily for putting his old tricks upon him; he swore he would not be imposed upon any longer;—the money or a jail—there lay his choice.

Brown protested for once with great truth, that he had no intention to deceive; declared that he had actually brought the money, and knew not what was become of it; but the thing was far too unlikely to gain credit. Brown now called to mind that he had fallen asleep on the settle in the room where they had supped. This raised his spirits; for he had no doubt but the case had fallen out of his pocket; he said he would step to the public-house and search for it, and would be back directly. Not one word of all this did the landlord believe, so inconvenient is it to have a bad character. He swore Brown should not stir out of his house without a constable, and made him wait while he sent for one. Brown, guarded by the constable, went back to the Blue Posts, the landlord charging the officer not to lose sight of the culprit. The caution was needless, Brown had not the least design of running away, so firmly persuaded was he that he should find his leather case.

But who can paint his dismay, when no tale or tidings of the leather case could be had! The master, the mistress, the boy, and the maid of the public-house all protested they were innocent. His suspicions soon fell on the strollers with whom he had passed the night; and he now found out, for the first time, that a merry evening did not always produce a happy morning. He obtained a warrant, and proper officers were sent in pursuit of the strollers. No one, however, believed he had really lost any thing: and as he had not a shilling left to defray the expensive treat he had given, the master of the inn agreed with the other landlord in thinking this story was a trick to defraud them both, and Brown remained in close custody. At length the officers returned, who said they had been obliged to let the strollers go, as they could not fix the charge on any one, and they had all offered to swear before a justice that they had seen nothing of the leather case. It was at length agreed, that as he had passed the evening in a crowded barn, he had probably been robbed there, if at all; and among so many, who could pretend to guess at the thief?

Brown raved like a madman; he cried, tore his hair, and said he was ruined for ever. The abusive language of his old landlord, and his new creditor at the Blue Posts, did not lighten his sorrow. His landlord would be put off no longer. Brown declared he could neither find bail nor raise another shilling; and as soon as the forms of law were made out, he was sent to the county jail.

Here it might have been expected that hard living and much leisure would have brought him to reflect a little on his past follies. But his heart was not truly touched. The chief thing which grieved him at first was, his having abused the kindness of Stock, for to him he should appear guilty of a real fraud, where

where he had indeed been only vain, idle, and imprudent. And it is worth while here to remark, that vanity, idleness, and imprudence, often bring a man to utter ruin both of soul and body, though silly people do not put them in the catalogue of heavy sins, and those who indulge in them are often reckoned honest, merry fellows, with *the best hearts in the world.*

I wish I had room to tell my readers what befel Jack in his present doleful habitation, and what became of him afterwards. I promise them, however, that they shall certainly know the first of next month, when I hope they will not forget to enquire for the Fourth Part of the Shoemakers, or Jack Brown in prison.

PART IV.

Jack Brown in Prison.

BROWN was no sooner lodged in his doleful habitation, and a little recovered from his first surprise, than he sat down and wrote his friend Stock the whole history of the transaction. Mr. Stock, who had long known the exceeding lightness and dissipation of his mind, did not so utterly disbelieve the story as all the other creditors did. To speak the truth, Stock was the only one among them who had good sense enough to know, that a man may be completely ruined, both in what relates to his property and his soul, without committing

committing Old Bailey crimes. He well knew that idleness, vanity, and the love of *pleasure*, as it is falsely called, will bring a man a morsel of bread, as surely as those things which are reckoned much greater sins; and that they undermine his principles as certainly, though not perhaps quite so fast.

Stock was too angry with what had happened to answer Brown's letter, or to seem to take the least notice of him. However, he kindly and secretly undertook a journey to the hard-hearted old farmer, Brown's father to intercede with him, and to see if he would do any thing for his son. Stock did not pretend to excuse Jack, or even to lessen his offences; for it was a rule of his never to disguise truth or to palliate wickedness. Sin was still sin in his eyes, though it were committed by his best friend; but though he would not soften the sin he felt tenderly for the sinner. He pleaded with the old farmer on the ground, that his son's idleness and other vices would gather fresh strength in a jail. He told him, that the loose and worthless company which he would there keep would harden him in vice, and if he was now wicked he might there become irreclaimable.

But all his pleas were urged in vain. The farmer was not to be moved. Indeed he argued with some justice, that he ought not to make his industrious children beggars to save one rogue from the gallows. Mr. Stock allowed the force of his reasoning, though he saw the father was less influenced by this principle of justice than by resentment on account of the old story of Smiler. People, indeed, should take care that what appears in their conduct to proceed from justice does not really proceed from revenge. Wiser men than farmer Brown often deceive themselves and fancy they act on better principles than they really do, for want of looking a little more closely into their own hearts, and putting down every action to its

its true motive. When we are praying against deceit we should not forget to take self-deceit into the account.

Mr. Stock at length wrote to poor Jack; not to offer him any help, that was quite out of the question, but to exhort him to repent of his evil ways; to lay before him the sins of his past life, and to advise him to convert the present punishment into a benefit, by humbling himself before God. He offered his interest to get his place of confinement exchanged for one of those improved prisons, where solitude and labour have been made the happy instruments of bringing many to a better way of thinking, and ended by saying, that if he ever gave any solid signs of real amendment he would still be his friend in spite of all that was past.

If Mr. Stock had sent him a good sum of money to procure his liberty, or even a trifle to make merry with his wretched companions, Jack would have thought him a friend indeed. But to send him nothing but dry advice, and a few words of empty comfort, was, he thought, but a cheap shabby way of shewing his kindness. Unluckily the letter came just as he was going to sit down to one of those direful merrymakings which are often carried on with brutal riot within the doleful walls of a jail on the entrance of a new prisoner, who is often expected to give a feast to the rest.

When his companions were heated with gin; "Now," said Jack, "I'll treat you with a sermon, "and a very pretty preachment it is." So saying, he took out Mr. Stock's kind and pious letter, and was delighted at the bursts of laughter it produced. "What a canting dog!" said one. "Repentance, "indeed!" cried Tom Crew; "No, no, Jack, tell "this hypocritical rogue that if we have lost our li- "berty, it is only for having been jolly, hearty, fellows,

Let not the young reader fancy that Brown's misery arose entirely from his altered circumstances. It was not merely his being in want, and sick, and in a prison, which made his condition so desperate. Many an honest man unjustly accused, many a persecuted saint, many a holy martyr has enjoyed sometimes more peace and content in a prison than wicked men have ever tasted in the height of their prosperity. But to any such comforts, to any comfort at all poor Jack was an utter stranger.

A christian friend generally comes forward at the very time when worldly friends forsake the wretched. The other prisoners would not come near Brown, though he had often entertained and had never offended them; even his own father was not moved with his sad condition. When Mr. Stock informed him of it, he answered, "'Tis no more than he "deserves. As he brews so he must bake. He has "made his own bed, and let him lie in it."—The hard old man had ever at his tongue's end some proverb of hardness, or frugality, which he contrived to turn in such a way as to excuse himself.

We shall now see how Mr. Stock behaved. He had his favourite sayings too, but they were chiefly on the side of kindness, mercy, or some other virtue. "I must not," said he, "pretend to call myself a "Christian, if I do not requite evil with good." When he received the gaoler's letter with the account of Brown's sad condition, Will Simpson and Tommy Williams began to compliment him on his own wisdom and prudence, by which he had escaped Brown's misfortunes. He only gravely said, "Blessed be God that I am not in the same misery. "It is *He* who has made us to differ. But for *his* "grace I might have been in no better condition. "Now Brown is brought low by the hand of God, "it is my time to go to him."—"What, you!" said Will,

Will, "whom he cheated of your money?"—"This "is not a time to remember injuries," said Mr. Stock. "How can I ask forgiveness for my own sins, if I "withhold forgiveness from him?" So saying, he ordered his horse, and set off to see poor Brown; thus proving that his was a religion not of words but of deeds.

Stock's heart nearly failed him as he passed through the prison. The groans of the sick and dying, and, what to such a heart as his was still more moving, the brutal merriment of the healthy in such a place, pierced his very soul. Many a silent prayer did he put up as he passed along, that God would yet be pleased to touch their hearts, and that now (during this infectious sickness) might be the accepted time. The gaoler observed him drop a tear, and asked the cause. "I cannot forget," said he, "that the most "dissolute of these men is still my fellow-creature. "The same God made them; the same Saviour died "for them; how then can I hate the worst of them? "With my advantages they might have been much "better than I am; without the blessing of God on "my good minister's instructions, I might have been "worse than the worst of these. I have no cause for "pride, much for thankfulness; *Let us not be high-minded but fear.*"

It would have moved a heart of stone to have seen poor miserable Jack Brown lying on his wretched bed, his face so changed by pain, poverty, dirt, and sorrow, that he could hardly be known for that merry soul of a jack-boot, as he used to be proud to hear himself called. His groans were so piteous that it made Mr. Stock's heart ache. He kindly took him by the hand, though he knew the distemper was catching.—"How dost do, Jack?" said he, "dost "know me?" Brown shook his head and said, faintly, "Know you! aye, that I do. I am sure I have

"but

" but one friend in the world who would come to see " me in this woeful condition. O James! what " have I brought myself to? What will become of " my poor soul? I dare not look back, for that is " all sin, nor forward for that all misery and woe."

Mr. Stock spoke kindly to him, but did not attempt to chear him with false comfort, as is too often done. " I am ashamed to see you in this dirty place," says Brown. " As to the place, Jack," replied the other, " if it has helped to bring you to a sense of your past " offences, it will be no bad place for you. I am " heartily sorry for your distress and your sickness; " but if it should please God by them to open your " eyes, and to shew you that sin is a greater evil " than the prison to which it has brought you, all " may yet be well. I had rather see you in this " humble penitent state, lying on this dirty bed, in " this dismal prison, than roaring and rioting at the " Greyhound, the king of the company, with hand- " some clothes on your back, and plenty of money " in your pocket."

Brown wept bitterly and squeezed his hand, but was too weak to say much. Mr. Stock then desired the gaoler to let him have such things as were need- ful, and he would pay for them. He would not leave the poor fellow till he had given him with his own hands some broth which the gaoler had got ready for him, and some medicines which the doctor had sent. All this kindness cut Brown to the heart. He was just able to sob out, " My unnatural father " leaves me to perish, and my injured friend is more " than a father to me." Stock told him that one proof he must give of his repentance was, that he must forgive his father, whose provocation had been very great. He then said he would leave him for the present to take some rest, and desired him to lift up his heart to God for mercy. " Dear James," replied

replied Brown, " do you pray for me. God per-
" haps may hear you, but he will never hear the
" prayer of such a sinner as I have been." " Take
" care how you think so," said Stock. " To be-
" lieve that God cannot forgive you would be still
" a greater sin than any you have yet committed
" against him." He then explained to him in a few words, as well as he was able, the nature of repentance and forgiveness through a Saviour, and warned him earnestly against unbelief and hardness of heart.

Poor Jack grew much refreshed in body with the comfortable things he had taken; and a little cheered with Stock's kindness in coming so far to see, and to forgive such a forlorn outcast, sick of an infectious distemper, and locked within the walls of a prison. Surely, said he to himself, there must be some mighty power in a religion which can lead men to do such things! things so much against the grain as to forgive such an injury, and to risk catching such a distemper; but he was so weak he could not express this in words. He tried to pray, but he could not; at length, overpowered with weariness, he fell asleep.

When Mr. Stock came back, he was surprised to find him so much better in body; but his agonies of mind were dreadful, and he had now got strength to express part of the horrors which he felt. " James," said he, (looking wildly,) " it is all over
" with me. I am a lost creature. Even your pray-
" ers cannot save me."—" Dear Jack," replied Mr. Stock, " I am no minister; it does not become me
" to talk much to thee: but I know I may venture
" to say whatever is in the Bible. As ignorant as I
" am I shall be safe enough while I stick to that."
—" Aye," said the sick man, " you used to be
" ready enough to read to me, and I would not lis-
" ten,

"ten, or if I did it was only to make fun of what I "heard, and now you will not so much as read a "bit of a chapter to me."

This was the very point to which Stock longed to bring him. So he took a little Bible out of his pocket, which he always carried with him on a journey, and read slowly verse by verse, the 55th chapter of Isaiah. When he came to the sixth and seventh verses. poor Jack cried so much that Stock was forced to stop. The words were *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord.* Here Brown stopped him, saying, "Oh it is too late, too late for "me."—"Let me finish the verse," said Stock, "and you will see your error; you will see that it "is never too late." So he read on—*Let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Here Brown started up, snatched the book out of his hand, and cried out, "Is that really there? No, no; "that's of your own putting in, in order to com-"fort me; let me look at the words myself."—"No, indeed," said Stock, "I would not for the "world give you unfounded comfort, or put off any "notion of my own for a scripture doctrine."—"But is it possible!" cried the sick man, "that "God may really pardon me? Do'st think he can? "Do'st think he will?"—"I am sure of it," said Stock; "I dare not give thee false hopes, or in-"deed, any hopes of my own. But these are "God's own words, and the only difficulty is to "know when we are really brought into such a "state as that the words may be applied to us. "For a text may be full of comfort, and yet may "not belong to us."

Mr. Stock was afraid of saying more. He would not venture out of his depth; nor, indeed, was poor Brown

Brown able to bear more discourse just now. So he made him a present of the Bible folding down such places as he thought might be best suited to his state, and took his leave, being obliged to return home that night. He left a little money with the gaoler, to add a few comforts to the allowance of the prison, and promised to return in a short time.

When he got home, he described the sufferings and misery of Brown in a very moving manner; but Tommy Williams, instead of being properly affected at it, only said, "Indeed, master, I am "not very sorry; he is rightly served."—"How, "Tommy," said Mr. Stock (rather sternly,) "not "sorry to see a fellow-creature brought to the low- "est state of misery; one too whom you haveknown "so prosperous?" "No, master, I can't say I am; "for Mr. Brown used to make fun of you, and "laugh at you for being so godly, and reading "your Bible."

"Let me say a few words to you, Tommy," said Mr. Stock. "In the first place you should "never watch for the time of a man's being brought "low by trouble to tell of his faults. Next, you "should never rejoice at his trouble, but pity him, "and pray for him. Lastly, as to his ridiculing me "for my religion, if I cannot stand an idle jest, I "am not worthy the name of a Christian.—*He that "is ashamed of me and my word*, do'st remember "what follows, Tommy?"—"Yes, master, 'twas "last Sunday's text,—*of him shall the Son of Man "be ashamed when he shall judge the world.*"

Mr. Stock soon went back to the prison. But he did not go alone. He took with him Mr. Thomas, the worthy Minister who had been the guide and instructor of his youth, who was so kind as to go at his request and visit this forlorn prisoner. When they got to Brown's door, they found him sitting

up

up in his bed with the Bible in his hand. This was a joyful sight to Mr. Stock, who secretly thanked God for it. Brown was reading aloud; they listened; it was the fifteenth of Saint Luke. The circumstances of this beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son were so much like his own, that the story pierced him to the soul; and he stopped every minute to compare his own case with that of the Prodigal. He was just got to the eighteenth verse, *I will arise and go to my father*,—at that moment he spied his two friends; joy darted into his eyes. "O dear "Jem," said he, "it is *not* too late, I will arise and "go to my father, my heavenly Father, and you, "sir, will shew me the way, won't you?" said he to Mr. Thomas, whom he recollected. "I am "very glad to see you in so hopeful a disposition." said the good Minister. "O sir," said Brown, "what a place is this to receive you in? O, see to "what I have brought myself!"

"Your condition, as to this world, is indeed very "low," replied the good divine. "But what are "mines, dungeons, or gallies, to that eternal hopeless prison to which your unrepented sins must "soon have consigned you. Even in this gloomy "prison, on this bed of straw, worn down by pain, "poverty, and want, forsaken by your worldly "friends, an object of scorn to those with whom you "used to carouse and riot; yet here, I say, brought "thus low, if you have at last found out your own "vileness, and your utterly undone state by sin, "you may still be more an object of favour in the "sight of God, than when you thought yourself "prosperous and happy; when the world smiled "upon you, and you passed your days and nights "in envied gaiety and unchristian riot. If you "will but improve the present awful visitation; if "you do but heartily renounce and abhor your present

" sent awful visitation; if you do but heartily re-
" nounce and abhor your present evil courses; if you
" even now turn to the Lord your Saviour with lively
" faith, deep repentance, and unfeigned obedience,
" I shall still have more hope of you than of many
" who are going on quite happy, because quite insen-
" sible. The heavy laden sinner, who has discovered
" the iniquity of his own heart, and his utter inability
" to help himself, may be restored to God's favour,
" and become happy, though in a dungeon. And be
" assured, that he who from deep and humble contri-
" tion dares not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven,
" when with a hearty faith he sighs out, *Lord be*
" *merciful to me a sinner*, shall in no wise be cast
" out. These are the words of him who cannot
" lie."

It is impossible to describe the self-abasement, the grief, the joy, the shame, the hope, and the fear which filled the mind of this poor man. A dawn of comfort at length shone on his benighted mind. His humility and fear of falling back into his former sins, if he should ever recover, Mr. Thomas thought were strong symptoms of a sound repentance. He improved and cherished every good disposition he saw arising in his heart, and particularly warned him against self deceit, self-confidence, and hypocrisy.

After Brown had deeply expressed his sorrow for his offences, Mr. Thomas thus addressed him:—
" There are two ways of being sorry for sin. Are
" you, Mr. Brown, afraid of the guilt of sin because
" of the punishment annexed to it, or are you afraid
" of sin itself? Do you wish to be delivered from
" the power of sin? Do you hate sin because you
" know it is offensive to a pure and holy God? Or
" are you only ashamed of it because it has brought
" you to a prison, and exposed you to the contempt
" of the world? It is not said that the wages of this
" or that particular sin is death, but of sin in general;

" there is no exception made because it is a more " creditable or a favourite sin, or because it is a little " one. There are, I repeat, two ways of being sor- " ry for sin. Cain was sorry—*My punishment is* " *greater than I can bear*, said he ; but here you see " the punishment seemed to be the cause of concern, " not the sin. David seems to have had a true no- " tion of godly sorrow, when he says, *Wash me from* " *mine iniquity, cleanse me from my sin.* And when " Job *repented in dust and ashes*, it is not said he ex- " cused himself, but *he abhorred himself.* And the " prophet Isaiah called himself *undone*, because he " was *a man of unclean lips ;* for, said he, *I have seen* " *the King, the Lord of hosts ;* that is, he could not " take the proper measure of his own iniquity till he " had considered the perfect holiness of God."

One day, when Mr. Thomas and Mr. Stock came to see him, they found him more than commonly af- fected. His face was more ghastly pale than usual, and his eyes were red with crying. " Oh, sir," said he " what a sight I have just seen ! Jolly George, as " we used to call him, the ringleader of all our mirth, " who was at the bottom of all the fun, and tricks, " and wickedness, that are carried on within these " walls, Jolly George is just dead of the jail distem- " per ! He taken, and I left ! I *would* be carried into " his room to speak to him, to beg him to take warn- " ing by me, and that I might take warning by him. " But what did I see ! what did I hear ! not one " sign of repentance ; not one dawn of hope. Ago- " ny of body, blasphemies on his tongue, despair in " his soul ; while I am spared and comforted with " hopes of mercy and acceptance. Oh, if all my old " friends at the Greyhound could but then have seen " Jolly George ! A hundred sermons about death, " sir, don't speak so home, and cut so deep, as the " sight of one dying sinner."

Brown

Brown grew gradually better in his health, that is, the fever mended, but the distemper settled in his limbs, so that he seemed likely to be a poor, weakly cripple the rest of his life. But as he spent much of his time in prayer, and in reading such parts of the Bible as Mr. Thomas directed, he improved every day in knowledge and piety, and of course grew more resigned to pain and infirmity.

Some months after this, his hard-hearted father, who had never been prevailed upon to see him, or offer him the least relief, was taken off suddenly by a fit of apoplexy; and, after all his threatenings, he died without a will. He was one of those silly, superstious men, who fancy they shall die the sooner for having made one; and who love the world and the things that are in the world so dearly, that they dread to set about any business which may put them in mind that they are not always to live in it. As, by this neglect, his father had not fulfilled his threat of cutting him off with a shilling, Jack, of course, went shares with his brothers in what their father left.—What fell to him proved to be just enough to discharge him from prison, and to pay all his debts, but he had nothing left. His joy at being thus enabled to make restitution was so great, that he thought little of his own wants. He did not desire to conceal the most trifling debt, nor to keep a shilling for himself.

Mr. Stock undertook to settle all his affairs. There did not remain money enough, after every creditor was satisfied, even to pay for his removal home. Mr. Stock kindly sent his own cart for him with a bed in it, made as comfortable as possible, for he was too weak and lame to be removed any other way, and Mrs. Stock gave the driver a particular charge to be tender and careful of him, and not to drive hard, nor to leave the cart a moment.

Mr. Stock would fain have taken him into his own house, at least for a time, so convinced was he of his sincere reformation both of heart and life; but Brown would not be prevailed on to be further burdensome to this generous friend. He insisted on being carried to the parish workhouse, which he said was a far better place than he deserved. In this house Mr. Stock furnished a small room for him, and sent him every day a morsel of meat from his own dinner. Tommy Williams begged that he might always be allowed to carry it, as some atonement for his having for a moment so far forgotten his duty, as rather to rejoice than sympathize in Brown's misfortunes. He never thought of this fault without sorrow, and often thanked his master for the wholesome lesson he then gave him, and he was the better for it all his life.

Mrs. Stock often carried poor Brown a dish of tea or a bason of good broth herself. He was quite a cripple, and never able to walk out as long as he lived. Mr. Stock, Will Simpson and Tommy Williams laid their heads together, and contrived a sort of barrow on which he was often carried to church by some of his poor neighbours, of which Tommy was always one; and he requited their kindness, by reading a good book to them whenever they would call in; and he spent his time in teaching their children to sing psalms or say the catechism.

It was no small joy to him thus to be enabled to go to church. Whenever he was carried by the Greyhound, he was much moved, and used to put up a prayer full of repentance for the past, and praise for the present.

PART

PART V.

A Dialogue between James Stock and Will Simpson, the Shoemakers, as they sat at Work, on the duty of carrying Religion into our common Business.

JAMES STOCK, and his journeyman Will Simpson, as I informed my readers in the Second Part, had resolved to work together one hour every evening, in order to pay for Tommy Williams's schooling. This circumstance brought them to be a good deal together when the rest of the men were gone home. Now it happened that Mr. Stock had a pleasant way of endeavouring to turn all common events to some use; and he thought it right on the present occasion to make the only return in his power to Will Simpson for his great kindness. For, said he, if Will gives up so much of his time, to help me to provide for this poor boy, it is the least I can do to try to turn part of that time to the purpose of promoting Will's spiritual good. Now as the bent of Stock's own mind was religious, it was easy to him to lead their talk to something profitable. He always took especial care, however, that the subject should be introduced properly, chearfully, and without constraint.—As he well knew that great good may be sometimes done by a prudent attention in seizing proper opportunities, so he knew that the cause of piety had been sometimes hurt by forcing serious subjects where there was clearly no disposition to receive them. I say he had found out that two things were necessary to the promoting of religion among his friends; a warm

warm zeal to be always on the watch for occasions, and a cool judgment to distinguish which was the right time and place to make use of them. To know *how* to do good is a great matter, but to know *when* to do it is no small one.

Simpson was an honest good-natured young man; he was now become sober, and rather religiously disposed. But he was ignorant; he did not know much of the grounds of religion, or of the corruption of his own nature; he was regular at church, but was first drawn thither rather by his skill in psalm-singing than by any great devotion. He had left off going to the Greyhound, and often read the Bible, or some other good book on the Sunday evening. This he thought was quite enough; he thought the Bible was the prettiest history book in the world, and that religion was a very good thing for Sundays. But he did not much understand what business people had with it on working days. He had left off drinking because it had brought Williams to the grave, and his wife to dirt and rags; but not because he himself had seen the evil of sin. He now considered swearing and sabbath breaking as scandalous and indecent, but he had not found out that both were to be left off because they are highly offensive to God, and grieve his Holy Spirit. As Simpson was less self conceited than most ignorant people are, Stock had always a good hope that when he should come to be better acquainted with the word of God, and with the evil of his own heart, he would become one day a good christian. The great hindrance to this was, that he fancied himself so already.

One evening Simpson had been calling to Stock's mind how disorderly the house and shop, where they were now sitting quietly at work, had formerly been, and he went on thus:

Will.

Will. How comfortably we live now, master, to what we used to do in William's time! I used then never to be happy but when we were keeping it up all night, but now I am as merry as the day is long. I find I am twice as happy since I am grown good and sober.

Stock. I am glad you are happy, Will, and I rejoice that you are sober; but I would not have you take too much pride in your own *goodness* for fear it should become a sin, almost as great as some of those you have left off. Besides, I would not have you make quite so sure that you *are* good.

Will. Not good, master! why don't you find me regular and orderly at work?

Stock. Very much so, and accordingly I have a great respect for you.

Will. I pay every one his own, seldom miss church, had not been drunk since Williams died, have handsome clothes for Sundays, and save a trifle every week.

Stock. Very true, and very laudable it is; and to all this you may add that you very generously work an hour, for poor Tommy's education, every evening without fee or reward.

Will. Well, master, what can a man do more? If all this is not being good, I dont know what is.

Stock. All these things are very right as far as they go, and you could not well be a Christian without doing them. But I shall make you stare, perhaps, when I tell you, you may do all these things, and many more, and yet be no Christian.

Will. No Christian! surely, master, I do hope that after all I have done, you will not be so unkind as to say I am no Christian.

Stock. God forbid that I should say so, Will.—I hope better things of you. But come now, what do you think it is to be a Christian.

Will.

Will. What! why to be christened when one is a child, to learn the catechism when one can read, to be confirmed when one is a youth, and to go to church when one is a man.

Stock. These are all very proper things, and quite necessary. They make part of a Christian's life. But for all that, a man may be exact in them all, and yet not be a Christian.

Will. Not be a Christian! ha! ha! ha! you are very comical, master.

Stock. No indeed, I am very serious, Will. At this rate it would be a very easy thing to be a Christian, and every man who went through certain forms would be a good man; and one man who observed these forms would be as good as another. Whereas, if we come to examine ourselves by the word of God, I am afraid there are but few comparatively whom our Saviour would allow to be real Christians.—What is your notion of a Christian's practice?

Will. Why, he must not rob, nor murder, nor get drunk. He must avoid scandalous things, and do as other decent orderly people do.

Stock. It is easy enough to be what the world calls a Christian, but not to be what the Bible calls so.

Will. Why, master, we working men are not expected to be saints, and martyrs, and apostles, and ministers.

Stock. We are not. And yet, Will, there are not two sorts of Christianity; we are called to practise the same religion which they practised, and something of the same spirit is expected in us which we reverence in them. It was not saints and martyrs only to whom our Saviour said that they must *crucify the world with its affections and lusts.* We are called to *be holy* in our measure and degree, *as he who hath called us is holy.* It was not only saints and martyrs who

who were told that they must not be *like minded with Christ.* That *they must do all to the glory of God.*—That *they must renounce the spirit of the world, and deny themselves.* It was not to apostles only that Christ said, *They must have their conversation in Heaven.* It was not to a few holy men set apart for the altar, that he said, *They must set their affections on things above.* That they *must not be conformed to the world.* No, it was to fishermen, to publicans, to farmers, to day-labourers, to poor tradesmen, that he spoke when he told them, they must *love not the world, nor the things of the world.—That they must renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, grow in grace, lay up for themselves treasures in Heaven.*

Will. All this might be very proper for *them* to be taught, because they had not been bred up Christians, but Heathens or Jews: and Christ wanted to make them his followers, that is, Christians. But thank God we do not want to be taught all this, for we *are* Christians, born in a Christian country, of Christian parents.

Stock. I suppose then you fancy that Christianity comes to people in a Christian country by nature?

Will. I think it comes by a good education or a good example. When a fellow who has got any sense sees a man cut off in his prime by drinking, like Williams, I think he will begin to leave it off. When he sees another man respected, like you, master, for honesty and sobriety, and going to church, why he will grow honest, and sober, and go to church; that is, he will see it his advantage to be a Christian.

Stock. Will, what you say is the truth, but 'tis not the whole truth. You are right as far as you go, but you do not go far enough. The worldly advantages of piety, are, as you suppose, in general great. Credit, prosperity, and health, almost naturally attend

tend on a religious life, both because a religious life supposes a sober and industrious life; and because a man who lives in a course of duty puts himself in the way of God's blessing. But a true Christian has a still higher aim in view, and will follow religion even under circumstances, when it may hurt his credit and ruin his prosperity, if it should ever happen to be the will of God that he should be brought into such a trying state.

Will. Well, master, to speak the truth, if I go to church on Sundays, and follow my work in the week, I must say I think that is being good.

Stock. I agree with you, that he who does both, gives the best outward signs that he is good as you call it. But our going to church, and even reading the bible, are no proofs that we are as good as we need be, but rather that we do both these in order to make us better than we are. We do both on Sundays, as means, by God's blessing, to make us better all the week. We are to bring the fruits of that chapter or of that sermon into our daily life, and try to get our inmost heart and secret thoughts, as well as our daily conduct, amended by them.

Will. Why sure, master, you won't be so unreasonable as to want a body to be religious always? I can't do that neither. I'm not such a hypocrite as to pretend to it.

Stock. Yes, you can be so in every action of your life!

Will. What, master, always to be thinking about religion?

Stock. No, far from it Will; much less to be always talking about it. But you must be always acting under its power and spirit.

Will. But surely 'tis pretty well if I do this when I go to church; or while I am saying my prayers. Even you, master, as strict as you are, would not have

me

me always on my knees, nor always at church, I suppose: for then how would your work be carried on, and how would our town be supplied with shoes?

Stock. Very true, Will. 'Twould be no proof of our religion to let our customers go barefoot; but 'twould be a proof of our laziness, and we should starve as we ought to do. The business of the world must not only be carried on, but carried on with spirit and activity. We have the same authority for not being *slothful in business* as we have for being *fervent in spirit.* Religion has put godliness and laziness as wide asunder as any two things in the world; and what God has separated, let no man pretend to join. Indeed the spirit of religion can have no fellowship with sloth, indolence, and self-indulgence. But still, a christian does not carry on his common trade quite like another man neither; for something of the spirit which he labours to attain at church, he carries with him into his worldly concerns. While there are some who set up for Sunday Christians, who have no notion that they are bound to be week-day Christians too.

Will. Why, master, I do think, if God Almighty is contented with one day in seven, he won't thank you for throwing him the other six into the bargain. I thought he gave us them for our own use; and I am sure nobody works harder all the week than you do.

Stock. God, it is true, sets apart one day in seven for actual rest from labour. and for more immediate devotion to his service. But shew me that text, wherein he says, thou shalt love the Lord thy God on *Sundays*—Thou shalt keep my commandments on the *Sabbath Day*—To be carnally minded on *Sundays, is death*—Cease to do evil, and learn to do well *one day in seven*—Grow in grace on the *Lord's Day* Is there any such text?

Will.

Will. No, to be sure there is not; for that would be encouraging sin on all the other days.

Stock. Yes, just as you do when you make religion a thing for the church, and not for the world. There is no one lawful calling in pursuing which we may not serve God acceptably. You and I may serve him while we are stitching this pair of boots. Farmer Furrow, while he is plowing yonder field. Betsy West, over the way, whilst she is nursing her sick mother. Neighbour Incle, in measuring out his tapes and ribbons. I say, all these may serve God just as acceptably in those employments as at church, I had almost said more so.

Will. Aye, indeed—how can that be? Now you're too much on t'other side.

Stock. Because a man's trials in trade being often greater, they give him fresh means of glorifying God, and proving the sincerity of religion. A man who mixes in business, is naturally brought into continual temptations and difficulties. These will lead him, if he be a good man to look more to God, than he perhaps would otherwise do. He sees temptations on the right hand and on the left; he knows that there are snares all around him; this makes him watchful: he feels that the enemy within is too ready to betray him; this makes him humble himself; while a sense of his own difficulties makes him tender to the failings of others.

Will. Then you would make one believe, after all, that trade and business must be sinful in itself, since it brings a man into all these snares and scrapes.

Stock. No, no, Will; trade and business don't create evil passions—they were in the heart before—Only now and then they seem to lie snug a little—our concerns with the world bring them out into action a little more, and thus shew both others and ourselves

selves what we really are. But then, as the world offers more trials on the one hand, so on the other it holds out more duties. If we are called to battle oftener, we have more opportunities of victory. Every temptation resisted, is an enemy subdued; and *he that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a city.*

Will. I don't quite understand you, master.

Stock. I will try to explain myself. There is no passion more called out by the transactions of trade than covetousness. Now, 'tis impossible to withstand such a master sin as that, without carrying a good deal of the spirit of religion into one's trade.

Will. Well, I own I don't yet see how I am to be religious when I'm hard at work, or busy settling an account. I can't do two things at once; 'tis as if I were to pretend to make a shoe and cut out a boot at the same moment.

Stock. I tell you both must subsist together. Nay, the one must be the motive to the other. God commands us to be industrious, and if we love him, the desire of pleasing him should be the main spring of our industry.

Will. I don't see how I can always be thinking about pleasing God.

Stock. Suppose, now, a man had a wife and children whom he loved, and wished to serve; would not he be often thinking about them while he was at work? and though he would not be *always* thinking nor always talking about them, yet would not the very love he bore them be a constant spur to his industry? He would always be pursuing the same course from the same motive, though his words and even his thoughts must often be taken up in the common transactions of life.

Will. I say first one, then the other; now for labour, now for religion.

Stock.

Stock. I will shew that both must go together. I will suppose you were going to buy so many skins of our currier—that is quite a worldly transaction—you can't see what a spirit of religion has to do with buying a few calves' skins. Now, I tell you it has a great deal to do with it. Covetousness, a desire to make a good bargain, may rise up in your heart. Selfishness, a spirit of monopoly, a wish to get all, in order to distress others; these are evil desires, and must be subdued. Some opportunity of unfair gain offers, in which there may be much sin, and yet little scandal. Here a Christian will stop short; he will recollect, *That he who maketh haste to be rich shall hardly be innocent.* Perhaps the sin may be on the side of your dealer—*he* may want to over-reach *you*—this is provoking—you are tempted to violent anger, perhaps to swear;—here is a fresh demand on you for a spirit of patience and moderation, as there was before for a spirit of justice and self-denial. If, by God's grace, you get the victory over these temptations, you are the better man for having been called out to them; always provided that the temptations be not of your own seeking. If you give way and sink under these temptations, don't go and say that trade and business have made you covetous, passionate and profane. No, no; depend upon it, you were so before; you would have had all these evil seeds lurking in your heart, if you had been loitering about at home and doing nothing, with the additional sin of idleness into the bargain. When you are busy, the devil often tempts you; when you are idle, you tempt the devil. If business and the world call these evil tempers into action, business and the world call that religion into action too which teaches us to resist them. And in this you see the week-day fruit of the Sunday's piety. 'Tis

trade

trade and business in the week which call us to put our Sunday readings, praying, and church-going into practice.

Will. Well, master, you have a comical way, somehow, of coming over one. I never should have thought there would have been any religion wanted in buying and selling a few calves' skins. But, I begin to see there is a good deal in what you say. And, whenever I am doing a common action, I will try to remember that it must be done *after a godly sort.*

Stock. I hear the clock strike nine—let us leave off our work. I will only observe farther, that one good end of our bringing religion into our business is, to put us in mind not to undertake more business than we can carry on consistently with our religion. I shall never commend that man's diligence, though it is often commended by the world, who is not diligent about the salvation of his soul. We are as much forbidden to be overcharged with the *cares* of life as with its *pleasures.* I only wish to prove to you, that a discreet Christian may be wise for both worlds; that he may employ his hands without entangling his soul, and labour for the meat that perisheth without neglecting that which endureth unto eternal life; that he may be prudent for time, while he is wise for eternity.

PART VI.

Dialogue the Second. On the duty of carrying Religion into our Amusements.

THE next evening Will Simpson being got first to his work, Mr. Stock found him singing very cheerfully over his last. His master's entrance did not prevent his finishing his song, which concluded with these words:

> "Since life is no more than a passage at best,
> "Let us strew the way over with flowers."

When Will had concluded his song, he turned to Mr. Stock, and said, "I thank you, master, for first "putting it into my head how wicked it is to sing "prophane and indecent songs. I never sing any "now which have any wicked words in them."

Itock. I am glad to hear it. So far you do well, But there are other things as bad as wicked words, nay worse perhaps, though they do not so much shock the ear of decency.

Will. What is that, master? What *can* be so bad as wicked words?

Stock. Wicked *thoughts*, Will. Which thoughts, when they are covered over with smooth words, and dressed out in pleasing rhymes, so as not to shock modest young people by the sound, do more harm to their principles than those songs of which the words are so gross and disgusting, that no person of common decency can for a moment listen to them.

Will.

Will. Well, master, I am sure that was a very pretty song I was singing when you came in, and a song which very sober good people sing.

Stock. Do they? Then I will be bold to say, that singing such songs is no part of their goodness. I heard indeed but two lines of it, but they were so heathenish that I desire to hear no more.

Will. Now you are really too hard. What harm could there be in it? there was not one indecent word.

Stock. I own, indeed, that indecent words are particularly offensive. But, as I said before, though immodest expressions offend the ear more, they do not corrupt the heart, perhaps, much more than songs of which the words are decent, and the principle vicious. In the latter case, because there is nothing that shocks his ear, a man listens till the sentiment has so corrupted his heart, thas his ear grows hardened too, and by long custom he loses all sense of the danger of profane diversions; and I must say I have often heard young women of character sing songs in company which I should be ashamed to read by myself. But come, as we work let us talk over this business a little; and first let us stick to this sober song of yours that you boast so much about. *(repeats.)*

> "Since life is no more than a passage at best,
> "Let us strew the way over with flowers."

Now what do you learn by this?

Will. Why, master, I don't pretend to learn much by it. But 'tis a pretty tune and pretty words.

Stock. But what do those pretty words mean?

Will. That we must make ourselves merry because life is short.

Stock. Will! Of what religion are you?

Will. You are always asking one such odd questions, master; why a Christian to be sure.

Stock. If I often ask you, or others, this question, it is only because I like to know what grounds I am to go upon when I am talking with you or them. I conceive that there are in this country two sorts of people, Christians, and no Christians. Now, if people profess to be of this first description, I expect one kind of notions, opinions, and behaviour from them; if they say they are of the latter, then I look for another set of notions and actions from them. I compel no man to think with me. I take every man at his word. I only expect him to think and believe according to the character he takes upon himself, and to act on the principles of that character which he professes to maintain.

Will. That's fair enough; I can't say but it is, to take a man at his own word, and on his own grounds.

Stock. Well then. Of whom does the scripture speak when it says, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?*

Will. Why of heathens to be sure, not of Christians.

Stock. And of whom, when it says, *Let us crown ourselves with rosebuds before they are withered?*

Will. O that is Solomon's worldly fool.

Stock. You disapprove of both then?

Will. To be sure I do. I should not be a Christian if I did not.

Stock. And yet, though a Christian, you are admiring the very same thought in the song you were singing. How do you reconcile this?

Will. O there is no comparison between them. These several texts are designed to describe loose wicked heathens. Now I learn texts as part of my religion

religion. But religion you know has nothing to do with a song. I sing a song for my pleasure.

Stock. In our last night's talk, Will, I endeavoured to prove to you that religion was to be brought into our *business.* I wish now to let you see that it is to be brought into our *pleasure* also. And that he who is really a Christian, must be a Christian in his very diversions.

Will. Now you are too strict again, master; as you last night declared, that in our business you would not have us always praying, so I hope that in our pleasure you would not have us always psalm-singing. I hope you would not have all one's singing to be about good things.

Stock. Not so Will; but I would not have any part either of our business or our pleasure to be about evil things. It is one thing to be singing *about* religion, it is another thing to be singing *against* it. Saint Peter, I fancy, would not much have approved your favourite song. He at least seemed to have another view of the matter, when he said, *The end of all things is at hand.* Now this text teaches much the same awful truth with the first line of your song. But let us see to what different purposes the apostle and the poet turn the very same thought. Your song says, because life is so short, let us make it merry. Let us divert ourselves so much on the road that we may forget the end. Now what says the apostle, *Because the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.*

Will. Why, master, I like to be sober too, and have left off drinking. But still I never thought that we were obliged to carry texts out of the Bible to try the soundness of a song; and to enable us to judge if we might be both merry and wise in singing it.

Stock. Providence has not so stinted our enjoyments, Will, but he has left us many subjects of harmless merriment: but, for my own part, I am never certain that any one is quite harmless till I have tried it by this rule that you seem to think so strict. There is another favourite catch which I heard you and some of the workmen humming yesterday.

Will. I will prove to you that there is not a word of harm in *that*; pray listen now. *(sings.)*

"Which is the best day to drink—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday?"

Stock. Now, Will, do you really find your unwillingness to drink is so great, that you stand in need of all these incentives to provoke you to it? Do you not find temptation strong enough without exciting your inclinations, and whetting your appetites in this manner? Can any thing be more unchristian than to persuade youth by pleasant words, set to the most alluring music, that the pleasures of drinking are so great, that every day in the week, naming them all successively, by way of fixing and enlarging the idea, is equally fit, equally proper, and equally delightful, for what?—for the low and sensual purpose of getting drunk. Tell me, Will, are you so *very* averse to pleasure? Are you naturally cool and dead to all passion and temptation, that you really find it necessary to inflame your imagination, and disorder your senses, in order to excite a quicker relish for the pleasures of sin?

Will. All this is true enough, indeed; but I never saw it in this light before.

Stock. As I passed by the Greyhound last night, in the way to my evening's walk in the fields, I caught this one verse of a song which the club were singing.

"Bring

" Bring the flask, the music bring,
" Joy shall quickly find us;
" Drink and dance, and laugh and sing,
" And cast dull care behind us."

When I got into the fields, I could not forbear comparing this song with the second lesson last Sunday evening at church; these were the words; *Take heed lest at any time your heart be overcharged with drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares, for as a snare shall it come upon all them that are on the face of the earth.*

Will. Why, to be sure if the second lesson was right, the song must be wrong.

Stock. I ran over in my mind also a comparison between such songs as that which begins with

" Drink and drive care away."

with those injunctions of holy writ, *Watch and pray therefore, that you enter not into temptation;* and again, *Watch and pray that you may escape all these things.* I say I compared this with the song I allude to,

" Drink and drive care away,
" Drink and be merry;
" You'll ne'er go the faster
" To the Stygian ferry."

I compared this with that awful admonition of Scripture how to pass the time, *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Will. I am afraid, then, master, you would not much approve of what I used to think a very pretty song, which begins with,

" A plague

" A plague on those musty old lubbers,
" Who teach us to fast and to think."

Stock. Will, what would you think of any one who should sit down and write a book or a song to abuse the clergy?

Will. Why I should think he was a very wicked fellow, and I hope no one would look into such a book, or sing such a song.

Stock. And yet it must certainly be the clergy who are scoffed at in that verse, it being their professed business to teach us to *think* and be serious.

Will. Aye, master, and now you have opened my eyes, I think I can make some of those comparisons myself between the spirit of the Bible and the spirit of these songs.

" Bring the flask, the goblet bring,"

won't stand very well in company with the threat of the prophet: *Woe unto them that rise up early, that they may mingle strong drink.*

Stock. Aye, Will; and these thoughtless people who live up to their singing, seem to be the very people described in another place as glorying in their intemperance, and acting what their songs describe; —*They look at the wine and say it is red, it moveth itself aright in the cup.*

Will. I do hope I shall for the future not only become more careful what songs I sing myself, but also not to keep company with those who sing nothing else but what, in my sober judgment, I now see to be wrong.

Stock. As we shall have no *body* in the world to come, it is a pity not only to make our pleasures here consist entirely in the delights of animal life, but to make our very songs consist in extolling and exalting

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ing those delights which are unworthy of the man as well as of the Christian. If, through temptation o weakness, we fall into errors, let us not establish and confirm them by picking up all the songs and scraps of verses which excuse, justify, and commend sin. *That time is short*, is a reason given by these song-mongers why we should give into greater indulgences. *That time is short*, is a reason given by the Apostle why we should enjoy our dearest comforts as if we enjoyed them not.

Now, Will, I hope you will see the importance of so managing, that our diversions (for diversions of some kind we all require,) may be as carefully chosen as our other employments. For to make them such as shall effectually drive out of our minds all that the Bible and the Minister have been putting into them, seems to me as imprudent as it is unchristian. But this is not all. Such sentiments as these songs contain, set off by the prettiest music, heightened by liquor, and all the noise and spirit of what is called jovial company, all this, I say, not only puts every thing that is right out of the mind, but puts every thing that is wrong into it. Such songs, therefore, as tend to promote levity thoughtlessness, loose imaginations, false views of life, forgetfulness of death, contempt of whatever is serious, and neglect of whatever is sober, whether they be love songs, or drinking songs, will not, cannot be sung by any man or any woman who makes a serious profession of Christianity*.

* It is with regret I have lately observed, that the fashionable autho and singer of songs more loose, profane, and corrupt, than any of those here noticed, not only received a prize as the reward of his important services, but received also the public acknowledgments of an illustrious society for having *contributed to the happiness of their country!*

THE

HISTORY

OF

TOM WHITE THE POSTBOY.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

TOM WHITE was one of the best drivers of a post-chaise on the Bath road. Tom was the son of an honest labourer at a little village in Wiltshire: he was an active industrious boy, and as soon as he was old enough he left his father, who was burthened with a numerous family, and went to live with farmer Hodges, a sober worthy man in the same village. He drove the waggon all the week; and on Sundays, though he was now grown up, the farmer required him to attend the Sunday-school, carried on under the inspection of Dr. Shepherd, the worthy vicar, and always made him read his Bible in the evening after he had served his cattle; and would have turned him out of his service if he had ever gone to the ale-house for his own pleasure.

Tom

Tom by carrying some waggon-loads of faggots to the Bear inn, at Devizes, made many acquaintances in the stable-yard. He soon learnt to compare his own carter's frock, and shoes thick set with nails, with the smart red jacket, and tight boots of the post-boys, and grew ashamed of his own homely dress; he was resolved to drive a chaise, to get money, and to see the world. Foolish fellow! he never considered that, though it is true, a waggoner works hard all day, yet he gets a quiet evening at home, and undisturbed rest at night. However, as there must be chaise-boys as well as plough-boys, there was no great harm in the change. The evil company to which it exposed him, was the chief mischief. He left farmer Hodges, though not without sorrow at quitting so kind a master, and got himself hired at the Black Bear.

Notwithstanding the temptations to which he was now exposed, Tom's good education stood by him for some time. At first he was frightened to hear the oaths and wicked words which are too often uttered in a stable-yard. However, though he thought it very wrong, he had not the courage to reprove it, and the next step to being easy at seeing others sin, is to sin ourselves. By degrees he began to think it manly, and a mark of spirit in others to swear; though the force of good habits was so strong, that at first when he ventured to swear himself it was with fear, and in a low voice. But he was soon laughed out of his sheepishness, as they called it; and though he never became so profane and blasphemous as some of his companions, (for he never swore in cool blood, or in mirth, as so many do,) yet he would too often use a dreadful bad word when he was in a passion with his horses. And here I cannot but drop a hint on the deep folly, as well as wickedness, of being in a great rage with poor beasts, who, not having the gift

gift of reason, cannot be moved like human creatures, with all the wicked words that are said to them; though these dumb creatures, unhappily, having the gift of feeling, suffer as much as human creatures can do, at the cruel and unnecessary beatings given them. Tom had been bred up to think that drunkenness was a great sin, for he never saw farmer Hodges drunk in his life, and where a farmer is sober himself his men are less likely to drink, or if they do, the master can reprove them with the better grace.

Tom was not naturally fond of drink, yet for the sake of being thought merry company, and a hearty fellow, he often drank more than he ought. As he had been used to go to church twice on a Sunday, while he lived with the farmer, (who seldom used his horses on that day, except to carry his wife to church behind him,) Tom felt a little uneasy when he was sent the very first Sunday a long journey with a great family; for I cannot conceal the truth, that too many gentlefolks will travel, when there is no necessity for it, on a Sunday, and when Monday would answer the end just as well. This is a great grief to all good and sober people, both rich and poor; and it is still more inexcusable in the great, who have every day at their command. However, he kept his thoughts to himself, though he could not now and then help thinking how quietly things were going on at the farmer's, whose waggoner on a Sunday led as easy a life as if he had been a gentleman. But he soon lost all thoughts of this kind, and in time did not know a Sunday from a Monday. Tom went on prosperously, as it is called, for three or four years, got plenty of money, but saved not a shilling. As soon as his horses were once in the stable, whoever would might see them fed for Tom. He had other fish to fry. Fives, cards, cudgel-playing, laying wagers, and keeping

keeping loose company, each of which he at first disliked, and each of which he soon learned to practise, ran away with all his money and all his spare time; and though he was generally in the way as soon as the horses were ready, (because if there was no driving there was no pay,) yet he did not care whether the carriage was clean or dirty, if the horses looked well or ill, if the harness was whole, or the horses were shod. The certainty that the gains of to-morrow would make up for the extravagance of to-day, made him quite thoughtless and happy; for he was young, active, and healthy, and never foresaw that a rainy day might come, when he would want what he now squandered.

One day being a little flustered with liquor as he was driving his return chaise through Brentford, he saw just before him another empty carriage, driven by one of his acquaintance: he whipped up his horses, resolving to outstrip the other, and swearing dreadfully that he would be at the Red Lion first—for a pint,—"Done," cried the other—a wager. Both cut and spurred the poor beasts with the usual fury, as if their credit had been really at stake, or their lives had depended on this foolish contest. Tom's chaise had now got up to that of his rival, and they drove along-side of each other with great fury and many imprecations. But in a narrow part, Tom's chaise being in the middle, with his antagonist on one side, and a cart driving against him on the other, the horses reared, the carriages got entangled; Tom roared out a great oath to the other to stop, which he either could not, or would not do, but returned an horrid imprecation that he would win the wager if he was alive. Tom's horses took fright, and he himself was thrown to the ground with great violence. As soon as he could be got from under the wheels, he was taken up senseless, his leg was broke

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in two places, and his body much bruised. Some people whom the noise had brought together, put him in the post-chaise, in which the waggoner kindly assisted, but the other driver seemed careless and indifferent, and drove off, observing with a brutal coolness, I am sorry I have lost my pint; I should have beat him hollow, had it not been for this *little accident*. Some gentlemen who came out of the inn, after reprimanding this savage, inquired who he was, wrote to inform his master, and got him discharged: resolving that neither they nor any of their friends would ever employ him, and he was long out of place, and nobody ever cared to be driven by him.

Tom was taken to one of those excellent hospitals with which London abounds. His agonies were dreadful, his leg was set, and a high fever came on. As soon as he was left alone to reflect on his condition, his first thought was that he should die, and his horror was inconceivable.—Alas! said he, what will become of my poor soul? I am cut off in the very commission of three great sins:—I was drunk, I was in a horrible passion, and I had oaths and blasphemies in my mouth.—He tried to pray, but he could not; his mind was all distraction, and he thought he was so very wicked that God would not forgive him; because, says he, I have sinned against light and knowledge; I have had a sober education, and good examples; I was bred in the fear of God, and the knowledge of Christ, and I deserve nothing but punishment. At length he grew light-headed, and there was little hope of his life. Whenever he came to his senses for a few minutes, he cried out, O! that my old companions could now see me, surely they would take warning by my sad fate, and repent before it is too late.

By the blessing of God on the skill of the surgeon, and the care of the nurses, he, however, grew better

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in a few days. And here let me stop to remark, what a mercy it is that we live in a christian country, where the poor, when sick, or lame, or wounded are taken as much care of as any gentry; nay, in some respects more, because in hospitals and infirmaries there are more doctors and surgeons to attend, than most private gentlefolks can afford to have at their own houses, whereas *there never was an hospital in the whole heathen world.* Blessed be God for this, among the thousand other excellent fruits of the Christian religion! A religion which, like its Divine Founder, while its grand object is the salvation of men's souls, teaches us also to relieve their bodily wants. It directs us never to forget that He who forgave sins healed diseases, and while he preached the Gospel, fed the multitude.

It was eight weeks before Tom could be taken out of bed. This was a happy affliction; for by the grace of God, this long sickness and solitude gave him time to reflect on his past life. He began seriously to hate those darling sins which had brought him to the brink of ruin. He could now pray heartily; he confessed and lamented his iniquities with many tears, and began to hope that the mercies of God, through the merits of a Redeemer, might yet be extended to him on his sincere repentance. He resolved never more to return to the same evil courses, but he did not trust in his own strength, but prayed that God would give him grace for the future, as well as pardon for the past. He remembered, and he was humbled at the thought, that he used to have short fits of repentance, and to form resolutions of amendment, in his wild and thoughtless days; and often when he had a bad head-ach after a drinking bout, or had lost his money at all-fours, he vowed never to drink or play again. But as soon as his head was well, and his pockets recruited, he forgot all his resolutions. And

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how should it be otherwise? for he trusted in his own strength, he never prayed to God to strengthen him, nor ever avoided the next temptation. He thought that amendment was a thing to be set about at any time; he did not know that *it is the grace of God which bringeth us to repentance.*

The case was now different. Tom began to find that *his strength was perfect weakness*, and that he could do nothing without the Divine assistance, for which he prayed heartily and constantly. He sent home for his Bible and Prayer-book, which he had not opened for two years, and which had been given him when he left the Sunday school. He spent the chief part of his time in reading them, and derived great comfort, as well as great knowledge, from this employment of his time. The study of the Bible filled his heart with gratitude to God, who had not cut him off in the midst of his sins, but had given him space for repentance; and the agonies he had lately suffered with his broken leg increased his thankfulness, that he had escaped the more dreadful pain of eternal misery. And here let me remark what encouragement this is for rich people to give away bibles and good books, and not to lose all hope, though, for a time, they see little or no good effect from it. According to all appearance, Tom's books were never likely to do him any good, and yet his generous benefactor, who had cast his bread upon the waters, found it after many days; for this Bible, which had lain untouched for years, was at last made the instrument of his reformation. God will work in his own good time, and in his own way, but *our* zeal and our exertions are the means by which he commonly chuses to work.

As soon as he got well, and was discharged from the hospital, Tom began to think he must return to get his bread. At first he had some scruples about going

going back to his old employ: but, says he sensibly enough, gentlefolks must travel, travellers must have chaises, and chaises must have drivers: 'tis a very honest calling, and I don't know that goodness belongs to one sort of business more than another; and he who can be good in a state of great temptation, provided the calling be lawful, and the temptations are not of his own seeking, and he be diligent in prayer, may be better than another man for aught I know: and *all that belongs to us is, to do our duty in that state of life in which it shall please God to call us*; and leave events in God's hand. Tom had rubbed up his catechism at the hospital, and 'tis a pity that people don't look at their catechism sometimes when they are grown up; for it is full as good for men and women as it is for children; nay, better; for though the answers contained in it are intended for children to *repeat*, yet the duties enjoined in it are intended for men and women to put in *practice*. It is, if I may so speak, the very grammar of Christianity and of our church, and they who understand every part of their catechism thoroughly, will not be ignorant of any thing which a plain Christian need to know.

Tom now felt grieved that he was obliged to drive on Sundays. But people who are in earnest and have their hearts in a thing, can find helps in all cases. As soon as he had set down his company at their stage, and had seen his horses fed, says Tom, a man who takes care of his horses, will generally think it right to let them rest an hour or two at least. In every town it is a chance but there may be a church open during part of that time. If the prayers should be over, I'll try hard for the sermon; it is a chance but I may catch the prayers; it is worth trying for, however; and as I used to think nothing of making a push, for the sake of getting an hour to gamble, I need not grudge to take a little pains extraordinary

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to serve God. By this watchfulness he soon got to know the hours of service at all the towns on the road he travelled; and while the horses fed, Tom went to church; and it became a favourite proverb with him, that *prayers and provender hinder no man's journey*; and I beg leave to recommend Tom's maxim to all travellers, whether master or servant, carrier or coachman.

At first his companions wanted to laugh and make sport of this—but when they saw that no lad on the road was up so early or worked so hard as Tom; when they saw no chaise so neat, no glasses so bright, no harness so tight, no drivers so diligent, so clean, or so civil, they found he was no subject to make sport at. Tom indeed was very careful in looking after the linch pins; in never giving his horses too much water when they were hot; nor, whatever was his haste, would he ever gallop them up hill, strike them across the head, or when tired, cut and slash them, or gallop over the stones, as soon as he got into a town, as some foolish fellows do. What helped to cure Tom of these bad practices, was, that remark he met with in the Bible, that *a good man is merciful to his beast.* He was much moved one day on reading the prophet Jonah, to observe what compassion the great God of heaven and earth had for poor beasts: for one of the reasons there given why the Almighty was unwilling to destroy the great city of Niveveh was, *because there was much cattle in it.* After this, Tom never could bear to see a wanton stroke inflicted. Doth God care for horses, said he, and shall man be cruel to them?

Tom soon grew rich for one in his station; for every gentleman on the road would be driven by no other lad if *careful Tom* was to be had. Being diligent he *got* a great deal of money; being frugal, he *spent* but little; and having no vices, he *wasted*

none. He soon found out that there was some meaning in that text which says, that *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come*: for the same principles which make a man sober and honest, have also a natural tendency to make him healthy and rich; while a drunkard and a spendthrift can hardly escape being sick and a beggar. Vice is the parent of misery in both worlds.

After a few years Tom begged a holiday, and made a visit to his native village; his good character had got thither before him. He found his father was dead, but during his long illness Tom had supplied him with money, and by allowing him a trifle every week, had had the honest satisfaction of keeping him from the parish. Farmer Hodges was still living, but being grown old and infirm, he was desirous to retire from business. He retained a great regard for his old servant, Tom; and finding he was worth money, and knowing he knew something of country business, he offered to let him a small farm at an easy rate, and promised his assistance in the management for the first year, with the loan of a small sum of money, that he might set out with a pretty stock. Tom thanked him with tears in his eyes, went back and took a handsome leave of his master, who made him a present of a horse and cart, in acknowledgment of his long and faithful services; for, says he, I have saved many horses by Tom's care and attention, and I could well afford to do the same by every servant who did the same by me; and should be a richer man at the end of every year by the same generosity, provided I could meet with just and faithful servants who deserved the same rewards.

Tom was soon settled in his new farm, and in less than a year had got every thing neat and decent about

about him. Farmer Hodges's long experience and friendly advice, joined to his own industry and hard labour, soon brought the farm to great perfection. The regularity, sobriety, peaceableness, and piety of his daily life, his constant attendance at church twice every Sunday, and his decent and devout behaviour when there, soon recommended him to the notice of Dr. Shepherd, who was still living, a pattern of zeal, activity, and benevolence to all parish priests. The doctor soon began to hold up Tom, or as we must now more properly term him, Mr. Thomas White, to the imitation of the whole parish, and the frequent and condescending conversation of this worthy clergyman contributed no less than his preaching to the improvement of his new parishioner in piety.

Farmer White soon found out that a dairy could not well be carried on without a mistress, and began to think seriously of marrying; he prayed to God to direct him in so important a business. He knew that a tawdry, vain, dressy girl was not likely to make good cheese and butter, and that a worldly and ungodly woman would make a sad wife and mistress of a family. He soon heard of a young woman of excellent character, who had been bred up by the vicar's lady, and still lived in the family as upper maid. She was prudent, sober, industrious, and religious. Her neat, modest, and plain appearance at church (for she was seldom seen any where else out of her master's family) was an example to all persons in her station, and never failed to recommend her to strangers, even before they had an opportunity of knowing the goodness of her character. It was her character, however, which recommended her to farmer White. He knew that *favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised*:—aye, and not only praised, but chosen too

says farmer White, as he took down his hat from the nail on which it hung, in order to go and wait on Dr. Shepherd, to break his mind and ask his consent; for he thought it would be a very unhandsome return for all the favours he was receiving from his minister, to decoy away his faithful servant from her place without his consent.

This worthy gentleman, though sorry to lose so valuable a member of his little family, did not scruple a moment about parting with her, when he found it would be so greatly to her advantage. Tom was agreeably surprised to hear she had saved fifty pounds by her frugality. The doctor married them himself, farmer Hodges being present.

In the afternoon of the wedding day, Dr. Shepherd condescended to call on farmer and Mrs. White to give a few words of advice on the new duties they had entered into; a common custom with him on those occasions. He often took an opportunity to drop, in the most kind and tender way, a hint on the great indecency of making marriages, christenings, and above all, funerals, days of riot and excess, as is too often the case in country villages. The expectation that the vicar might possibly drop in, in his walks, on these festivities, often restrained excessive drinking, and improper conversation, even among those who were not restrained by higher motives, as farmer and Mrs. White were.

What the doctor said was always in such a cheerful, good-humoured way, that it was sure to increase the pleasure of the day, instead of damping it. "Well, farmer," said he "and you, my faithful "Sarah, any other friend might recommend peace "and agreement to you on your marriage; but I, "on the contrary, recommend cares and strifes*." The company stared—but Sarah, who knew that

* See Dodd's Sayings.

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her old master was a facetious gentleman, and always had some good meaning behind, looked serious. "Cares and strifes, sir," said the farmer, "what do you mean?"—"I mean," said he "for "the first, that your cares shall be who shall please "God most, and your strifes, who shall serve him "best, and do your duty most faithfully. Thus, all "your cares and strifes being employed to the high-"est purposes, all petty cares and worldly strifes "shall be at an end.

"Always remember, that you have, both of you, a "better friend than each other." The company stared again, and thought no woman could have so good a friend as her husband. "As you have cho-"sen each other from the best motives," continued the doctor, "you have every reasonable ground to "hope for happiness; but as this world is a soil in "which troubles and misfortunes will spring up; "troubles from which you cannot save one another; "misfortunes which no human prudence can avoid: "then remember, 'tis the best wisdom to go to "that friend who is always near, always willing, "and always able, to help you, and that friend is "God."

"Sir," said farmer White, "I humbly thank you "for all your kind instructions, of which I shall now "stand more in need than ever, as I shall have more "duties to fulfil. I hope the remembrance of "my past offences will keep me humble, and the "sense of my remaining sin will keep me watchful. "I set out in the world, sir, with what is called a "good natural disposition, but I soon found, to my "cost, that without God's grace that will carry a "man but a little way. A good temper is a good "thing, but nothing but the fear of God can enable "one to bear up against temptation, evil company, "and evil passions. The misfortune of breaking

"my

" my leg, as I then thought it, has proved the " greatest blessing of my life. It shewed me my " own weakness, the value of the Bible, and the " goodness of God. How many of my brother " drivers have I seen, since that time, cut off in " the prime of life by drinking, or by some sudden " accident, while I have not only been spared, but " blessed and prospered. O sir! it would be the " joy of my heart, if some of my old comrades, " good-natured, civil fellows, (whom I can't help " loving,) could see, as I have done, the danger " of evil courses before it is too late. Though they " may not hearken to you, sir, or any other minis- " ter, they may believe *me*, because I have been " one of them: and I can speak from experience, of " the great difference there is, even as to worldly " comfort, between a life of sobriety and a life of " sin. I could tell them, sir, not as a thing I have " read in a book, but as a truth I feel in my own " heart, that to fear God and keep his command- " ments, will not only bring a man peace at the " last, but will make him happy *now*. And I will " venture to say, sir, that all the stocks, pillories, " prisons, and gibbets in the land, though so very " needful to keep bad men in order, yet will never " restrain a good man from committing evil, half so " much as that single text, *How shall I do this " great wickedness, and sin against God?*" Dr. Shepherd condescended to approve of what the farmer had said, kindly shook him by the hand, and took leave.

PART

PART II.

The way to Plenty, or the Second Part of Tom White. Written in 1795, *the Year of Scarcity.*

TOM WHITE, as we have shewn in the first part of his history, from an idle postboy was become a respectable farmer. God had blessed his industry, and he had prospered in the world. He was sober and temperate, and, as was the natural consequence he was active and healthy. He was industrious and frugal, and he became prosperous in his circumstances. This is in the ordinary course of Providence. But it is not a certain and necessary rule. *God maketh his sun to shine on the just and the unjust.* A man who uses every honest means of thrift and industry, will, in most cases, find success attend his labours. But still the *race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.*—God is sometimes pleased, for wise ends, to disappoint all the worldly hopes of the most upright man. His corn may be smitten by a blight; his barns may be consumed by fire; his cattle may be carried off by distemper. And to these, and other misfortunes, the good man is as liable as the spendthrift or the knave. Success is the *common* reward of industry, but if it were its *constant* reward, the industrious would be tempted to look no further than the present state. They would lose one strong ground of their faith. It would set aside the scripture scheme. This world would then be looked on as a state of reward, instead of a state of trial, and we should forget to look to a day of final retribution.

Farmer

Farmer White never took it into his head, that, because he paid his debts, worked early and late, and eat the bread of carefulness, he was therefore to come into no *misfortune like other folk*, but was to be free from the common trials and troubles of life. He knew that prosperity was far from being a sure mark of God's favour, and had read in good books, and especially in the Bible, of the great poverty and afflictions of the best of men. Though he was no great scholar, he had sense enough to observe, that a time of public prosperity was not always a time of public virtue; and he thought that what was true of a whole nation might be true of one man. So the more he prospered the more he prayed that prosperity might not corrupt his heart. And when he saw lately signs of public distress coming on, he was not half so much frightened as some others were, because he thought it might do us good in the long run; and he was in hopes that a little poverty might bring on a little penitence. The great grace he laboured after was that of a cheerful submission. He used to say, that if the Lord's Prayer had only contained those four little words, *Thy will be done*, it would be worth more than the biggest book in the world without them.

Dr. Shepherd, the worthy vicar, (with whom the farmer's wife had formerly lived as housekeeper,) was very fond of taking a walk with him about his grounds, and he used to say, that he learnt as much from the farmer as the farmer did from him. If the doctor happened to observe, I am afraid these long rains will spoil this fine piece of oats, the farmer would answer, but then, sir, think how good it is for the grass. If the doctor feared the wheat would be but indifferent, the farmer was sure the rye would turn out well. When grass failed, he did not doubt but turnips would be plenty. Even for floods

floods and inundations he would find out some way to justify Providence. 'Tis better, said he, to have our lands a little overflowed, than that the springs should be dried up, and our cattle faint for lack of water. When the drought came, he thanked God that the season would be healthy; and high winds, which frightened others, he said served to clear the air. Whoever, or whatever was wrong, he was always sure that Providence was in the right. And he used to say, that a man with ever so small an income, if he had but frugality and temperance, and would cut off all vain desires, and cast his care upon God, was richer than a lord who was tormented by vanity and covetousness. When he saw others in the wrong, he did not, however, abuse them for it, but took care to avoid the same fault. He had sense and spirit enough to break through many old but very bad customs of his neighbours. If a thing is wrong in itself, (said he one day to farmer Hodges,) a whole parish doing it can't make it right.—And as to its being an old custom, why, if it be a good one I like it the better for being old, because it has had the stamp of ages, and the sanction of experience on its worth. But if it be old as well as bad, that is another reason for my trying to put an end to it, that we may not mislead our children as our fathers have misled us.

The Roof-Raising.

Some years after he was settled, he built a large new barn. All the workmen were looking forward to the usual holiday of roof-raising. On this occasion it was a custom to give a dinner to the workmen, with so much liquor after it that they got so drunk,

drunk, that they not only lost the remaining half-day's work, but they were not always able to work the following day.

Mrs. White provided a plentiful dinner for roof-raising, and gave each man his mug of beer. After a hearty meal they began to grow clamorous for more drink. The farmer said, "My lads, I don't "grudge you a few gallons of ale merely for the "sake of saving my liquor, though that is some con-"sideration, especialy in these dear times; but I "never will, knowingly, help any man to make a "beast of himself. I am resolved to break through "a bad custom. You are now well refreshed. If "you will go cheerfully to your work, you will have "half a day's pay to take on Saturday night more "than you would have, if this afternoon were wast-"ed in drunkenness. For this your families will be "the better; whereas, were I to give you more li-"quor, when you have already had enough, I should "help to rob them of their bread. But I wish to "shew you, that I have your good at heart full as "much as my own profit. If you will now go to "work, I will give you all another mug at night "when you leave off. Thus your time will be sav-"ed, your families helped, and my ale will not go "to make reasonable creatures worse than brute "beasts."

Here he stopped. "You are in the right on't, "master," said Tom the Thatcher; "you are a "hearty man, farmer," said John Plane, the carpenter.——"Come along, boys," said Tim Brick the mason; so they all went merrily to work, fortified with a good dinner. There was only one drunken surly fellow that refused; this was Dick Guzzle the smith. Dick never works above two or three days in the week, and spends the others at the Red Lion. He swore, that if the farmer did not give him as much liquor

quor as he liked at roof-raising, he would not strike another stroke, but would leave the job unfinished, and he might get hands where he could. Farmer White took him at his word, and paid him off directly: glad enough to get rid of such a sot, whom he had only employed from pity to a large and almost starving family. When the men came for their mug in the evening, the farmer brought out the remains of the cold gammon; they made a hearty supper, and thanked him for having broken through a foolish custom, which was afterwards much left off in that parish, though Dick would not come into it, and lost most of his work in consequence.

Farmer White's labourers were often complaining, that things were so dear that they could not buy a bit of meat. He knew it was partly true, but not entirely; for it was before these very hard times that their complaints began. One morning he stept out to see how an outhouse which he was thatching went on. He was surprised to find the work at a stand. He walked over to the thatcher's house. "Tom," "said he, I desire that piece of work may be finish-"ed directly. If a shower comes my grain will be "spoiled."—"Indeed, master, I shan't work to-day, "nor to-morrow neither," said Tom. "You for-"get that 'tis Easter Monday, and to-morrow is Eas-"ter Tuesday. And so on Wednesday I shall thatch "away, master. But 'tis hard if a poor man, who "works all the seasons round, may not enjoy these "few holidays, which come but once a-year."

Tom, said the farmer, "when these days were "first put into our prayer-book, the good men who "ordained them to be kept, little thought that the "time would come when *holy-day* should mean "*drunken-day*, and that the seasons which they meant "to distinguish by superior piety, should be convert-"ed into seasons of more than ordinary excess. How

"much

" much dost think now I shall pay thee for this piece " of thatch ?"—" Why you know, master, you have " let it to me by the great. I think between this " and to-morrow night, as the weather is so fine, I " could clear about four shillings, after I have paid " my boy ; but thatching does not come often, and " other work is not so profitable."—" Very well, " Tom ; and how much now do you think you may " spend in these two holidays ?"—" Why, master, " if the ale is pleasant, and the company merry, I " do not expect to get off for less than three shil- " lings."—" Tom, can you do pounds, shillings, " and pence ?"—" I can make a little score, master, " behind the kitchen door, with a bit of chalk, which " is as much as I want."—" Well, Tom, add the " four shillings you would have earned to the three " you intend to spend, what does that make ?"— " Let me see ! three and four make seven. Seven " shillings, master." " Tom, you often tell me the " times are so bad that you can never buy a bit of " meat. Now here is the cost of two joints at once ; " to say nothing of the sin of wasting time and get- " ing drunk."—" I never once thought of that," said Tom.—" Now Tom," said the farmer, " if I " were you, I would step over to butcher Jobbins's, " buy a shoulder of mutton, which being left from " Saturday's market you will get a little cheaper.— " This I would make my wife bake in a deep dish " full of potatoes. I would then go to work, and " when the dinner was ready I would go and enjoy " it with my wife and children ; you need not give " the mutton to the brats ; the potatoes will have " all the gravy, and be very savoury for them."— " Aye, but I've got no beer, master ; the times are " so hard that a poor man can't afford to brew a drop " of drink now as we used to do."

" Times

"Times are bad, and malt is very dear, Tom, and "yet both don't prevent you from spending seven "shillings in keeping holiday. Now send for a quart "of ale as it is to be a feast; and you will even then "be four shillings richer than if you had gone to the "public house. I would have you put by these four "shillings, till you can add a couple to them; with "this I would get a bushel of malt, and my wife "should brew it, and you may take a pint of your "own beer at home of a night, which will do you "more good than a gallon at the Red Lion."—"I "have a great mind to take your advice, master, but "I shall be made such fun of at the Lion! they will "so laugh at me if I don't go!" Let those laugh that "win, Tom."—"But, master, I have got a friend "to meet me there."—"Then ask your friend to "come and eat a bit of your cold mutton at night, "and here is six-pence for another pot, if you will "promise to brew a small cask of your own."—"Thank you, master, and so I will; and I won't go "to the Lion. Come, boy, bring the helm, and "fetch the ladder." And so Tom was upon the roof in a twinkling. The barn was thatched, the mutton bought, the beer brewed, the friend invited, and the holiday enjoyed.

The Sheep Shearing.

Dr. Shepherd happened to say to farmer White one day, that there was nothing he disliked more than the manner in which sheep-shearing and harvest-home were kept by some in his parish. "What," said the good doctor, "just when we are blest with a "prosperous gathering in of these natural riches of "our land, the fleece of our flocks; when our barns "are crowned with plenty, and we have, through

"the

" the divine blessing on our honest labour, reaped " the fruits of the earth in due season ; is that very " time to be set apart for ribaldry, and riot, and " drunkenness ? Do we thank God for his mercies, " by making ourselves unworthy and unfit to enjoy " them ? When he crowns the year with his good- " ness, shall we affront him by our impiety ? It is " more than a common insult to his providence ; it " is a worse than brutal return to *Him* who openeth " his hand and filleth all things living with plente- " ousness."

" I thank you for the hint, sir," said the farmer. " I am resolved to rejoice though, and others shall " rejoice with me : and we will have a merry night " on't."

So Mrs. White dressed a very plentiful supper of meat and pudding ; and spread out two tables. The farmer sat at the head of one, consisting of some of his neighbours, and all his work-people. At the other sat his wife, with two long benches on each side of her. On these benches sat all the old and infirm poor, especially those who lived in the workhouse, and had no day of festivity to look forward to in the whole year but this. On the grass, in the little court, sat the children of his labourers, and of the other poor, whose employment it had been to gather flowers, and dress and adorn the horns of the ram ; for the farmer did not wish to put an end to any old custom, if it was innocent. His own children stood by the table, and he gave them plenty of pudding, which they carried to the children of the poor, with a little draught of cyder to every one. The farmer who never sat down without begging a blessing on his meal, did it with suitable solemnity on the present joyful occasion.

Dr. Shepherd practised one very useful method, which I dare say was not peculiar to himself ; a method

thod of which I doubt not other country clergymen have found the advantage. He was often on the watch to observe those seasons when a number of his parishioners were assembled together, not only at any season of festivity, but at their work. He has been known to turn a walk through a hay field to good account; and has been found to do as much good by a few minutes discourse with a little knot of reapers, as by his Sunday's sermon. He commonly introduced his religious observations by some questions relating to their employment; he first gained their affections by his kindness, and then converted his influence over them to their soul's good. The interest he took in their worldly affairs opened their hearts to the reception of those divine truths which he was always earnest to impress upon them. By these methods too he got acquainted with their several characters, their spiritual wants, their individual sins, dangers and temptations, which enabled him to preach with more knowledge and successful application, than those ministers can do who are unacquainted with the state of their congregations. It was a remark of Dr. Shepherd's, that a thorough acquaintance with human nature was one of the most important species of knowledge a clergyman could possess.

The sheep-shearing feast, though orderly and decent, was yet hearty and chearful. Dr. Shepherd dropped in with a good deal of company he had at his house, and they were much pleased. When the doctor saw how the aged and the infirm poor were enjoying themselves, he was much moved; he shook the farmer by the hand, and said, "But thou, when "thou makest a feast, call the blind, and the lame, "and the halt; they cannot recompense thee, but "thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of "the just."

"Sir,"

"Sir," said the farmer, "'tis no great matter of "expence; I kill a sheep of my own; potatoes are "as plenty as black-berries, with people who have "a little forethought. I save much more cyder in "the course of a year by never allowing any carous-"ing in my kitchen, or drunkenness in my fields, "than would supply many such feasts as these, so "that I shall be never the poorer at Christmas. It "is cheaper to make people happy, sir, than to make "them drunk." The doctor and the ladies condescended to walk from one table to the other, and heard many merry stories, but not one profane word, or one indecent song: so that he was not forced to the painful necessity either of reproving them, or leaving them in anger. When all was over, they sung the sixty-fifth psalm, and the ladies all joined in it; and when they got home to the vicarage to tea, they declared they liked it better than any concert.

The Hard Winter.

In the famous cold winter of the year 1795, it was edifying to see how patiently farmer White bore that long and severe frost. Many of his sheep were frozen to death, but he thanked God that he had still many left. He continued to find in-door work that his men might not be out of employ. The season being so bad, which some others pleaded as an excuse for turning off their workmen, he thought a fresh reason for keeping them. Mrs. White was so considerate, that just at that time she lessened the number of her hogs, that she might have more whey and skim-milk to assist poor families. Nay, I have known her live on boiled meat for a long while together, in a sickly season, because the pot-liquor made such a supply

ply of broth for the sick poor. As the spring came on, and things grew worse, she never had a cake, a pye, or a pudding in her house; notwithstanding she used to have plenty of these good things, and will again, I hope, when the present scarcity is over; though she says she never will use such white flour again, even if it should come down to five shilling a bushel.

All the parish now began to murmur. Farmer Jones was sure the frost had killed the wheat. Farmer Wilson said the rye would never come up. Brown, the malster, insisted the barley was dead at the root. Butcher Jobbins said beef would be a shilling a pound. All declared there would not be a hop to brew with. The orchards were all blighted; there would not be apples enough to make a pye; and as to hay there would be none to be had for love nor money. "I'll tell you what," said farmer White, "the season is dreadful; the crops are unpromising "just now; but 'tis too early to judge. Don't let "us make things worse than they are. We ought "to comfort the poor, and you are driving them to "despair. Don't you know how much God was dis-"pleased with the murmurs of his chosen people? "And yet, when they were tired of manna he sent "them quails; but all did not do. Nothing satis-"fies grumblers. We have a promise on our side, "that *there shall be seed-time and harvest-time to the* "*end.* Let us then hope for a good day, but pro-"vide against an evil one. Let us rather prevent "the evil before it is come upon us, than sink under "it when it comes. Grumbling cannot help us; ac-"tivity can. Let us set about planting potatoes in "every nook and corner, in case the corn *should* fail, "which, however, I don't believe will be the case. "Let us mend our management before we are dri-"ven to it by actual want. And if we allow our ho-

" nest labourers to plant a few potatoes for their fa-
" milies in the headlands of our ploughed fields, or
" other waste bits of ground, it will do us no harm,
" and be a great help to them. The way to lighten
" the load of any public calamity is not to murmur
" at it, but put a hand to lessen it."

The farmer had many temptations to send his corn at an extravagant price to *a certain sea port town*, but as he knew that it was intended to export it against law, he would not be tempted to encourage unlawful gain; so he threshed out a small mow at a time, and sold it to the neighbouring poor far below the market-price. He served his own workmen first. This was the same to them as if he had raised their wages, and even better, as it was a benefit of which their families were sure to partake. If the poor in the next parish were more distressed than his own, he sold to them at the same rate. For, said he, there is no distinction of parishes in heaven, and though charity begins at home, yet it ought not to end there.

He had been used in good times now and then to catch a hare or a partridge, as he was qualified; but he now resolved to give up that pleasure. So he parted from a couple of spaniels he had: for he said he could not bear that his dogs should be eating the meat, or the milk, which so many men, women, and children wanted.

The White Loaf.

One day, it was about the middle of last July, when things seemed to be at the dearest, and the rulers of the land had agreed to set the example of eating nothing but coarse bread, Dr. Shepherd read, before sermon in the church, their public declaration,

on, which the magistrates of the county sent him, and which they had also signed themselves. Mrs. White, of course, was at church, and commended it mightily. Next morning the Doctor took a walk over to the farmer's, in order to settle further plans for the relief of the parish. He was much surprised to meet Mrs. White's little maid Sally with a very small white loaf, which she had been buying at a shop. He said nothing to the girl, as he never thought it right to expose the faults of a mistress to her servant; but walked on, resolving to give Mrs. White a severe lecture for the first time in his life. He soon changed his mind, for on going into the kitchen, the first person he saw was Tom the thatcher, who had had a sad fall from the ladder; his arm, which was slipped out of his sleeve, was swelled in a frightful manner. Mrs. White was standing at the dresser making the little white loaf into a poultice, which she laid upon the swelling in a large clean old linen cloth.

"I ask your pardon, my good Sarah," said the doctor; "I ought not, however appearances were "against you, to have suspected that so humble "and prudent woman as you are, would be led ei- "ther to indulge any daintiness of your own, or to "fly in the face of your betters, by eating white "bread while they are eating brown. Whenever I "come here, I see it is not needful to be rich in or- "der to be charitable. A bountiful rich man would "have sent Tom to a surgeon, who would have "done no more for him than you have done; for in "those inflammations the most skilful surgeon could "only apply a poultice. Your kindness in dressing "the wound yourself, will, I doubt not perform the "cure at the expence of that threepenny loaf and a "little hog's lard. And I will take care that Tom "shall have a good supply of rice from the subscrip-

" tion."—" And he shan't want for skim-milk," said Mrs. White; " and was he the best lord in the land, " in the state he is in, a dish of good rice milk " would be better for him than the richest meat."

The Parish Meeting.

On the tenth of August, the vestry held another meeting, to consult on the best method of further assisting the poor. The prospect of abundant crops now cheared every heart. Farmer White, who had a mind to be a little jocular with his desponding neighbours, said, " Well, neighbour Jones, all the " wheat was killed, I suppose! the barley is all dead " at the root!" Farmer Jones looked sheepish, and said, " To be sure the crops had turned out better " than he thought.—" Then," said Dr. Shepherd, " let us learn to trust Providence another time; let " our experience of his past goodness strengthen our " faith."

Among other things, they agreed to subscribe for a large quantity of rice, which was to be sold out to the poor at a very low price, and Mrs. White was so kind as to undertake the trouble of selling it. After their day's work was over, all who wished to buy at these reduced rates, were ordered to come to the farm on the Tuesday evening. Dr. Shepherd dropped in at the same time, and when Mrs. White had done weighing her rice, the doctor spoke as follows:

" My honest friends, it has pleased God, for some " wise end, to visit this land with a scarcity, to " which we have been but little accustomed. There " are some idle, evil-minded people, who are on " the watch for public distresses; not that they may " humble themselves under the mighty hand of God " (which is the true use to be made of all troubles),

" but

" but that they may benefit themselves by disturbing " the public peace. These people, by riot and drun- " kenness, double the evil which they pretend to " cure. Riot will complete our misfortunes, while " peace, industry, and good management, will go " near to cure them. Bread, to be sure, is uncom- " monly dear. Among the various ways of making " it cheaper, one is to reduce the quality of it, ano- " ther to lessen the quantity we consume. If we " cannot get enough of coarse wheaten bread, let " us make it of other grain. Or let us mix one half " of potatoes, and one half of wheat. This last is " what I eat in my own family; it is pleasant and " wholesome. Our blessed Saviour eat barley bread, " you know, as we are told in the last month's Sun- " day Reading of the Cheap Repository*, which I " hope you have all heard; as I desired the master " of the Sunday-school to read it just after evening- " service, when I know many of the parents are apt " to call in at the school. This is a good custom, " and one of those little books shall be often read at " that time.

" My good women, I truly feel for you at this " time of scarcity; and I am going to shew my " good-will, as much by my advice as my subscrip- " tion. It is my duty, as your friend and minister, " to tell you, that one half of your present hardships " is owing to *bad management*. I often meet your " children without shoes and stockings, with great " luncheons of the very whitest bread, and that three " times a-day. Half that quantity, and still less if " it were coarse, put into a dish of good onion or " leek porridge, would make them an excellent " breakfast. Many too, of the very poorest of you,

* See Cheap Repository, Tract on the Scarcity, printed for T. Evans, Long-Lane, West Smithfield, London.

" eat

" eat your bread hot from the oven; this makes the
" difference of one loaf in five; I assure you 'tis
" what I cannot afford to do. Come, Mrs. White,
" you must assist me a little. I am not very know-
" ing in these matters myself; but I know that the
" rich would be twice as charitable as they are, if
" the poor made a better use of their bounty. Mrs.
" White, do give these poor women a little advice
" how to make their pittance go further than it now
" does. When you lived with me you were famous
" for making us nice cheap dishes, and I dare say
" you are not less notable now you manage for your-
" self."

" Indeed, neighbours," said Mrs. White, what
" the good doctor says is very true. A halfpenny
" worth of oatmeal, or groats, with a leek or onion,
" out of your own garden, which costs nothing, a
" bit of salt, and a little coarse bread, will break-
" fast your whole family. It is a great mistake at
" any time to think a bit of meat is so ruinous, and
" a great load of bread so cheap. A poor man gets
" seven or eight shillings a week; if he is careful he
" brings it home. I dare not say how much of this
" goes for tea in the afternoon, now sugar and but-
" ter are so dear, because I should have you all up-
" on me; but I will say, that too much of this little
" goes even for bread, from a mistaken notion that it
" is the hardest fare. This, at all times, but parti-
" cularly just now, is bad management. Dry peas,
" to be sure, have been very dear lately; but now
" they are plenty enough. I am certain then, that
" if a shilling or two of the seven or eight was laid
" out for a bit of coarse beef, a sheep's head, or any
" such thing, it would be well bestowed. I would
" throw a couple of pound of this into the pot, with
" two or three handfuls of grey peas, an onion, and
" a little pepper. Then I would throw in a cabbage

" or

" or turnip, and carrot; or any garden stuff that " was most plenty; let it stew two or three hours, " and it will make a dish fit for his Majesty. The " working men should have the meat; the children " don't want it; the soup will be thick and substan- " tial, and requires no bread."

Rice Milk.

" You who can get skim-milk, as all our work- " men can, have a great advantage. A quart of " this, and a quarter of a pound of the rice you have " just bought, a little bit of all-spice, and brown " sugar, will make a dainty and cheap dish."

" Bless your heart!" muttered Amy Grumble, who looked as dirty as a cinder-wench, with her face and fingers all daubed with snuff; " rice milk, in- " deed! it is very nice to be sure for those who can " dress it, but we have not a bit of coal; rice is of " no use to us without firing;" " and yet," said the doctor, " I see your tea-kettle boiling twice every " day, as I pass by the poor-house, and fresh butter " at thirteen-pence a pound on your shelf." " O " dear sir," cried Amy, " a few sticks serve to boil " the tea-kettle.—" And a few more," said the Doc- tor, " will boil the rice milk, and give twice the " nourishment at a quarter of the expence."

Rice Pudding.

" PRAY, Sarah," said the Doctor, " how did " you use to make that pudding my children were " so fond of? And I remember, when it was cold, " we used to have it in the parlour for supper."— " Nothing more easy," said Mrs. White: " I put

" half

" half a pound of rice, two quarts of skim-milk, and " two ounces of brown sugar." " Well," said the Doctor, " and how many will this dine ?"—" Seven " or eight, sir." " Very well, and what will it " cost ?"—" Why, sir, it did not cost you so much, " because we baked it at home, and I used our own " milk; but it will not cost above seven-pence to " those who pay for both. Here, too, bread is sav- " ed."

" Pray, Sarah, let me put in a word," said farmer White: " I advise my men to raise each a large " bed of parsnips. They are very nourishing, and " very profitable. Sixpenny worth of seed, well " sowed, and trod in, will produce more meals than " four sacks of potatoes; and what is material to you " who have so little ground, it will not require more " than an eighth part of the ground which the four " sacks will take. Providence having contrived by " the very formation of this root that it shall occupy " but a very small space. Parsnips are very good the " second day warmed in the frying pan, and a little " rasher of pork, or bacon, will give them a nice " flavour."

Dr. Shepherd now said, " as a proof of the nou- " rishing quality of parsnips, I was reading in a his- " tory book this very day, that the American Indi- " ans make a great part of their bread of parsnips, " though Indian corn is so famous; it will make a " little variety too."

A Cheap Stew.

" I remember," said Mrs. White, " a cheap dish, " so nice that it makes my mouth water. I peel some " raw potatoes, slice them thin, put the slices into " a deep frying-pan, or pot, with a little water, an " onion,

" onion, and a bit of pepper. Then I get a bone or " two of a breast of mutton, or a little strip of salt " pork, and put into it. Cover it down close, keep " in the steam, and let it stew for an hour."

" You really get me an appetite, Mrs. White, by " your dainty receipts," said the Doctor. " I am " resolved to have this dish at my own table. I could " tell you another very good dish, and still cheap- " er," answered she. " Come, let us have it," cried the Doctor. " I shall write all down as soon as I " get home, and I will favour any body with a copy of " these receipts who will call at my house."—" And " I will do more, sir," said Mrs. White, " for I will " put any of these women in the way how to dress " it the first time, if they are at a loss. But this is " my dish:

" Take two or three pickled herrings, put them " into a stone jar, fill it up with potatoes, and a lit- " tle water, and let it bake in the oven till it is done. " I would give one hint more," added she; " I have " taken to use nothing but potatoe starch; and " though I say it, that should not say it, nobody's " linen in a common way looks better than ours."

" The Doctor now said, " I am sorry for one " hardship which many poor people labour under, I " mean the difficulty of getting a little milk. I wish " all farmers' wives were as considerate as you are, " Mrs. White. A little milk is a great comfort to " the poor, especially when their children are sick; " and I have known it answer to the seller as well as " to the buyer, to keep a cow or two on purpose to " sell it out by the quart, instead of making butter " and cheese."

" Sir," said farmer White, " I beg leave to say " a word to the men, if you please, for all your ad- " vice goes to the women. If you will drink less gin " you may get more meat. If you abstain from the

" ale-house

The people now chearfully departed with their rice, resolving, as many of them as could get milk, to put one of Mrs. White's receipts in practice, and an excellent supper they had.

THE

HISTORY

OF

HESTER WILMOT.

BEING THE SECOND PART OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL*.

HESTER WILMOT was born in the parish of Weston, of parents who maintained themselves by their labour; they were both of them ungodly, it is no wonder therefore they were unhappy. They lived badly together, and how could they do otherwise? for their tempers were very different, and they had no religion to smooth down this difference, or to teach them that they ought to bear with each others faults. Rebecca Wilmot was a proof that people may have some right qualities, and yet be but bad characters, and utterly destitute of religion. She was clean, notable, and industrious. Now I know some folks fancy that the poor who have these qualities need have no other, but this is a sad mistake, as I am sure every page in the Bible would shew;

* See the preceding volume.

and

and it is a pity people do not consult it oftener. They direct their plowing and sowing by the information of the Almanack, why will they not consult the Bible for the direction of their hearts and lives? Rebecca was of a violent, ungovernable temper; and that very neatness which is in itself so pleasing, in her became a sin, for her affection to her husband and children was quite lost in an over-anxious desire to have her house reckoned the nicest in the parish. Rebecca was also a proof that a poor woman may be as vain as a rich one, for it was not so much the comfort of neatness, as the praise of neatness, which she coveted. A spot on her hearth, or a bit of rust on a brass candlestick, would throw her into a violent passion. Now it is very right to keep the hearth clean and the candlestick bright, but it is very wrong so to set one's affections on a hearth, or a candlestick, as to make one's self unhappy if any trifling accident happens to them; and if Rebecca had been as careful to keep her heart without spot, or her life without blemish, as she was to keep her fire-irons free from either, she would have been held up in this history, not as a warning, but a pattern, and in that case her nicety would have come in for a part of the praise. It was no fault in Rebecca, but a merit, that her oak table was so bright you could almost see to put your cap on in it; but it was no merit but a fault, that when John, her husband, laid down his cup of beer upon it so as to leave a mark, she would fly out into so terrible a passion that all the children were forced to run to corners; now poor John having no corner to run to, ran to the ale-house, till that which was at first a refuge too soon became a pleasure.

Rebecca never wished her children to learn to read, because she said it would only serve to make them lazy, and she herself had done very well without

out it. She would keep poor Hester from church to stone the space under the chairs in fine patterns and flowers. I don't pretend to say there was any harm in this little decoration, it looks pretty enough, and it is better to let the children do that than do nothing. But still these are not things to set one's heart upon; and besides Rebecca only did it as a trap for praise; for she was sulky and disappointed if any ladies happened to call in and did not seem delighted with the flowers which she used to draw with a burnt stick on the white wash of the chimney corners. Besides, all this finery was often done on a Sunday, and there is a great deal of harm in doing right things at a wrong time, or in wasting much time on things which are of no real use, or in doing any thing at all out of vanity. Now I beg that no lazy slattern of a wife will go and take any comfort in her dirt from what is here said against Rebecca's nicety; for I believe, that for one who makes her husband unhappy through neatness, twenty do so by dirt and laziness. All excesses are wrong, but the excess of a good quality is not so common as the excess of a bad one; and not being so obvious, perhaps, for that very reason requires more animadversion.

John Wilmot was not an ill-natured man, but he had no fixed principle. Instead of setting himself to cure his wife's faults by mild reproof and a good example, he was driven by them into still greater faults himself. It is a common case with people who have no religion when any cross accident befals them, instead of trying to make the best of a bad matter, instead of considering their trouble as a trial sent from God to purify them, or instead of considering the faults of others as a punishment for their own sins, instead of this I say, what do they do but either sink down at once into despair, or else run for comfort into evil courses. Drinking is the common

common remedy for sorrow, if that can be called a remedy, the end of which is to destroy soul and body. John now began to spend all his leisure hours at the Bell. He used to be fond of his children; but when he could not come home in quiet and play with the little ones, while his wife dressed him a bit of hot supper, he grew in time not to come home at all, He who has once taken to drink can seldom be said to be guilty of one sin only; John's heart became hardened. His affection for his family was lost in self-indulgence. Patience and submission, on the part of his wife, might have won much upon a man of John's temper, but instead of trying to reclaim him, his wife seemed rather to delight in putting him as much in the wrong as she could, that she might be justified in her constant abuse of him. I doubt whether she would have been as much pleased with his reformation as she was with always talking of his faults, though I know it was the opinion of the neighbours, that if she had taken as much pains to reform her husband by reforming her own temper, as she did to abuse him and expose him, her endeavours might have been blessed with success. Good christians, who are trying to subdue their own faults, can hardly believe that the ungodly have a sort of savage satisfaction in trying, by indulgence of their own evil tempers, to lessen the happiness of those with whom they have to do. Need we look any farther for a proof of our own corrupt nature, when we see mankind delight in sins which have neither the temptation of profit or the allurement of pleasure, such as plaguing, vexing, or abusing each other.

Hester was the eldest of their five children; she was a sharp sensible girl, but at fourteen years old she could not tell a letter, nor had she ever been taught to bow her knee to Him who made her; for

John's

John's, or rather Rebecca's house, had seldom the name of God pronounced in it, except to be blasphemed.

It was just about this time, if I mistake not, that Mrs. Jones set up her Sunday School, of which Mrs. Betty Crew was appointed mistress, as was related in the last volume. Mrs. Jones finding that none of the Wilmots were sent to school, took a walk to Rebecca's house, and civilly told her she called to let her know that a school was opened, to which she desired her to send her children on the Sunday following, especially her eldest daughter Hester.—"Well," said Rebecca, "and what will "you give her if I do?"—"Give her!" replied Mrs. Jones, "that is rather a rude question, and "asked in a rude manner: however, as a soft answer turneth away wrath, I assure you that I will "give her the best learning; I will teach her to "*fear God and keep his commandments.*"—"I "would rather you would teach her to fear me, "and to keep my house clean," said this wicked woman. "She shan't come, however, unless you "will pay her for it."—"Pay her for it!" said the lady, "will it not be reward enough that she will "be taught to read the word of God without any "expence to you? For though many gifts both of "books and clothing will be given the children, "yet you are not to consider these gifts so much in "the light of payment as an expression of good-"will in your benefactors." "I say," interrupted Rebecca, "that Hester shan't go to school. Re-"ligion is of no use that I know of but to make peo-"ple hate their own flesh and blood; and I see no "good in learning but to make folks proud, and "lazy, and dirty. I cannot tell a letter myself, and "though I say it, that should not say it, there is "not a notabler woman in the parish."—"Pray,"

said Mrs. Jones mildly, " do you think that young " people will disobey their parents the more for be- " ing taught to fear God?"—" I don't think any " thing about it," said Rebecca; " I shan't let her " come, and there's the long and short of the matter. " Hester has other fish to fry; but you may have " some of these little ones if you will?"—" No," said Mrs. Jones, " I will not; I have not set up a " nursery, but a school. I am not at all this ex- " pence to take crying babes out of the mother's " way, but to instruct reasonable beings in the road " to eternal life; and it ought to be a rule in all " schools not to take the troublesome *young* child- " ren unless the mother will try to spare the *elder* " ones, who are capable of learning."—" But," said Rebecca, " I have a young child which Hester " must nurse while I dress dinner. And she must " iron the rags, and scour the irons, and dig the " potatoes, and fetch the water to boil them."— " As to nursing the child, that is indeed a necessary " duty, and Hester ought to stay at home part of " the day to enable you to go to church; and fami- " lies should relieve each other in this way, but as " to all the rest they are no reasons at all, for the " irons need not be scoured so often, and the rags " should be ironed, and the potatoes dug, and the " water fetched on the Saturday; and I can tell you " that neither your minister here, nor your judge " hereafter, will accept of any such excuses."

All this while Hester staid behind, pale and trembling, lest her unkind mother should carry her point. She looked up at Mrs. Jones with so much love and gratitude as to win her affection, and this good lady went on trying to soften this harsh mother. At last Rebecca condescended to say, " Well, I don't " know but I may let her come now and then when " I can spare her, provided I find you make it

" worth

" worth her while." All this time she had never asked Mrs. Jones to sit down, nor had once bid her young children be quiet, though they were crying and squalling the whole time. Rebecca fancied this rudeness was the only way she had of shewing she thought herself to be as good as her guest, but Mrs. Jones never lost her temper. The moment she went out of the house, Rebecca called out loud enough for her to hear, and ordered Hester to get the stone and a bit of sand to scrub out the prints of that dirty woman's shoes. Hester in high spirits chearfully obeyed, and rubbed out the stains so neatly, that her mother could not help lamenting that so handy a girl was going to be spoiled by being taught godliness, and learning, and such nonsense.

Mrs. Jones, who knew the world, told her agent, Mrs. Crew, that her grand difficulty would arise not so much from the children as the parents. These, said she, are apt to fall into that sad mistake, that because their children are poor, and have little of this world's goods, the mothers must make it up to them in false indulgence. The children of the gentry are much more reproved and corrected for their faults, and bred up in far stricter discipline. He was a king who said, *Chasten thy son, and let not thy rod spare for his crying.* But do not lose your patience; the more vicious the children are, you must remember the more they stand in need of your instruction. When they are bad, comfort yourself with thinking, how much worse they would have been but for you; and what a burden they would become to society if these evil tempers were to receive no check. The great thing which enabled Mrs. Crew to teach well, was the deep insight she had got into the corruption of human nature. And I doubt if any one can make a thoroughly good

teacher of religion and morals who wants this master-key to the heart. Others indeed may teach knowledge, decency, and good manners; but those, however valuable, are not Christianity. Mrs. Crew who knew that out of the heart proceed lying, theft, and all that train of evils which begin to break out even in young children, applied her labours to correct this root of evil. But though a diligent, she was an humble teacher, well knowing that unless the grace of God blessed her labours, she should but labour in vain.

Hester Wilmot never failed to attend the school, whenever her perverse mother would give her leave, and her delight in learning was so great, that she would work early and late to gain a little time for her book. As she had a quick capacity, she learned soon to spell and read, and Mrs. Crew observing her diligence, used to lend her a book to carry home, that she might pick up a little at odd times. It would be well if teachers would make this distinction. To give, or lend books to those who take no delight in them is an useless expence; while it is kind and right to assist well-disposed young people with every help of this sort. Those who love books seldom hurt them, while the slothful, who hate learning, will wear out a book more in a week than the diligent will do in a year. Hester's way was to read over one question in her catechism, or one verse in her hymn-book, by fire light before she went to-bed; this she thought over in the night; and when she was dressing herself in the morning she was glad to find she always knew a little more than she had done the morning before. It is not to be believed how much those people will be found to have gained at the end of the year, who are accustomed to work up all the little odd ends of remnants of leisure; who value time even more than money;

and

and who are convinced that minutes are no more to be wasted than pence. Nay, he who finds he has wasted a shilling may by diligence hope to fetch it up again; but no repentance, or industry, can ever bring back one wasted hour. My good young reader, if ever *you* are tempted to waste an hour, go and ask a dying man what he would give for that hour which you are throwing away, and according as he answers, so do you act.

As her mother hated the sight of a book, Hester was forced to learn out of sight: it was no disobedience to do this, as long as she wasted no part of that time which it was her duty to spend in useful labour. She would have thought it a sin to have left her work for her book: but she did not think it wrong to steal time from her sleep, and to be learning an hour before the rest of the family were awake. Hester would not neglect the washing-tub, or the spinning-wheel, even to get on with her catechism; but she thought it fair to think over her questions, while she was washing and spinning. In a few months she was able to read fluently in St. John's gospel, which is the easiest. But Mrs. Crew did not think it enough that her children could read a chapter, she would make them understand it also. It is in a good degree owing to the want of religious knowledge in teachers, that there is so little religion in the world. Unless the Bible is laid open to the understanding, children may read from Genesis to the Revelation, without any other improvement than barely learning how to pronounce the words. Mrs. Crew found there was but one way to compel their attention; this was by obliging them to return back again to her the sense of what she had read to them, and this they might do in their own words, if they could not remember the words of scripture. Those who had weak capacities would,

to

to be sure, do this but very imperfectly; but even the weakest, if they were willing, would retain something. She so managed, that *saying the Catechism* was not merely an act of the memory, but of the understanding; for she had observed formerly, that those who had learned the Catechism in the common formal way, when they were children, had never understood it when they became men and women, and it remained in the memory without having made any impression on the mind. Thus this fine summary of the christian religion is considered as little more than a form of words, the being able to repeat which is a qualification for being confirmed by the bishop, instead of being considered as really containing those grounds of christian faith and practice, by which they are to be confirmed christians.

Mrs. Crew used to say to Mrs. Jones, Those who teach the poor must indeed give line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little as they can receive it. So that teaching must be a great grievance to those who do not really make it a *labour of love*. I see so much levity, obstinacy, and ignorance, that it keeps my own forbearance in continual exercise, insomuch, that I trust that I am getting good myself while I am doing good to others. No one, madam, can know till they try, that after they have asked a poor untaught child the same question nineteen times, they must not lose their temper, but go on and ask it the twentieth. Now and then, when I am tempted to be impatient, I correct myself, by thinking over that active proof which our blessed Saviour requires of our love to him when he says, *Feed my lambs.*

Hester Wilmot had never been bred to go to church, for her father and mother had never thought of going themselves, unless at a christening in their own

own family, or at a funeral of their own neighbours, both of which they considered merely as opportunities for good eating and drinking, and not as offices of religion.

As poor Hester had no comfort at home, it was the less wonder she delighted in her school, her Bible, and her church; for so great is God's goodness, that he is pleased to make religion a peculiar comfort to those who have no other comfort. The God whose name she had seldom heard but when it was *taken in vain*, was now revealed to her as a God of infinite power, justice, and holiness. What she read in her Bible, and what she felt in her own heart, convinced her she was a sinner; and her catechism said the same. She was much distressed one day on thinking over this promise which she had just made, (in answer to the question which fell to her lot,) *To renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.* I say she was distressed on finding that these were not merely certain words which she was bound to repeat, but certain conditions which she was bound to perform. She was sadly puzzled to know how this was to be done, till she met with these words in her Bible; *My grace is sufficient for thee.* But still she was at a loss to know how this grace was to be obtained. Happily Mr. Simpson preached on the next Sunday from this text, *Ask and ye shall have*, &c. In this sermon was explained to her the nature, the duty, and the efficacy of prayer. After this she opened her heart to Mrs. Crew, who taught her the great doctrines of Scripture, in a serious, but plain way. Hester's own heart led her to assent to that humbling doctrine of the catechism, that *We are by nature born in sin;* and truly glad was she to be relieved by hearing of *That spiritual grace by which we have a new birth*

birth unto righteousness. Thus her mind was no sooner humbled by one part, than it gained comfort from another. On the other hand, while she was rejoicing in *a lively hope in God's mercy through Christ*, her mistress put her in mind that that was the only *true* repentance, *by which we forsake sin.* Thus the catechism, explained by a pious teacher, was found to contain *all the articles of the christian faith.*

Mrs. Jones greatly disapproved the practice of turning away the scholars because they were grown up. Young people, said she, want to be warned at sixteen more than they did at six, and they are commonly turned adrift at the very age when they want most instruction; when dangers and temptations most beset them. They are exposed to more evil by the leisure of a Sunday evening than by the business of a whole week: but then religion must be made pleasant, and instruction must be carried on in a kind, and agreeable, and familiar way. If they once dislike the teacher they will soon get to dislike what is taught, so that a master or mistress is in some measure answerable for the future piety of young persons, insomuch as that piety depends on their manner of making religion pleasant as well as profitable.

To attend Mrs Jones's evening instructions was soon thought not a task but a holiday. In a few months it was reckoned a disadvantage to the character of any young person in the parish to know they did not attend the evening school. At first, indeed, many of them came only with a view to learn amusement; but, by the blessing of God, they grew fond of instruction, and some of them became truly pious. Mrs. Jones spoke to them one Sunday evening as follows:—"My dear young wo-
"men, I rejoice at your improvement; but I rejoice
"with trembling. I have known young people set
"out well, who afterwards fell off. The heart is de-
"ceitful.

"ceitful. Many like religious knowledge, who do "not like the strictness of a religious life. I must "therefore watch whether those who are diligent at "church and school, are diligent in their daily walk. "Whether those who say they *believe* in God, really "*obey* him. Whether they who profess to *love* Christ "keep his *commandments*. Those who hear them-"selves commended for early piety, may learn to "rest satisfied with the praise of man. People may "get a knack at religious phrases without being re-"ligious; they may even get to frequent places of "worship as an amusement, in order to meet their "friends, and may learn to delight in a sort of *spiri-"tual gossip*, while religion has no power in their "hearts. But I hope better things of you, and things "that accompany salvation, though I thus speak."

What became of Hester Wilmot, with some account of Mrs. Jones's May-day feast for her school, my readers shall be told next month.

PART II.

The New Gown.

HESTER WILMOT, I am sorry to observe, had been by nature peevish, and lazy; she would when a child, now and then slight her work, and when her mother was very unreasonable she was too apt to return her a saucy answer; but when she became acquainted with her own heart, and with the scriptures, these

these evil tempers were, in a good measure, subdued, for she now learnt to imitate, not her violent mother, but *him who was meek and lowly*. When she was scolded for doing ill, she prayed for grace to do better; and the only answer she made to her mother's charge, "that religion only served to make people "lazy," was to strive to do twice as much work, in order to prove that it really made them diligent. The only thing in which she ventured to disobey her mother was, that when she ordered her to do week-days' work on a Sunday, Hester cried, and said, she did not dare to disobey God; but to show that she did not wish to save her own labour, she would do a double portion of work on the Saturday night, and rise two hours earlier on the Monday morning.

Once, when she had worked very hard, her mother told her she would treat her with a holiday the following Sabbath, and take her a fine walk to eat cakes and drink ale at Weston fair, which, though it was professed to be kept on the Monday, yet, to the disgrace of the village, always began on the Sunday evening*. Rebecca, who would on no account have wasted the Monday, which was a working day, in idleness and pleasure, thought she had a very good right to enjoy herself at the fair on the Sunday evening, as well as to take her children. Hester earnestly begged to be left at home, and her mother in a rage went without her. A wet walk, and more ale than she was used to drink, gave Rebecca a dangerous fever. During this illness, Hester, who would

* This practice is too common. Those fairs which profess to be kept on Monday, commonly begin on the Sunday. It is much to be wished that magistrates would put a stop to it, as Mr. Simpson did at Weston, at the request of Mrs. Jones. There is another great evil worth the notice of justices. In many villages, during the fair, ale is sold at private houses, which have no licence, to the great injury of sobriety and good morals.

not follow her to a scene of dissolute mirth, attended her night and day, and denied herself necessaries that her sick mother might have comforts: and though she secretly prayed to God that this sickness might change her mother's heart, yet she never once reproached her, or put her in mind, that it was caught by indulging in a sinful pleasure.

Another Sunday night her father told Hester, he thought she had now been at school long enough for him to have a little good of her learning, so he desired she would stay at home and read to him. Hester cheerfully ran and fetched her Testament. But John fell a laughing, called her a fool, and said, it would be time enough to read the Testament to him when he was going to die, but at present he must have something merry. So saying, he gave her a song-book which he had picked up at the Bell. Hester having cast her eyes over it, refused to read it, saying she did not dare offend God by reading what would hurt her own soul. John called her a canting hypocrite, and said, he would put the Testament into the fire, for that there was not a more merry girl than she was before she became religious. Her mother for once took her part, not because she thought her daughter in the right, but because she was glad of any pretence to shew her husband was in the wrong; though she herself would have abused Hester for the same thing if John had taken her part. John, with a shocking oath, abused them both, and went off in a violent passion. Hester, instead of saying one undutiful word against her father, took up a Psalter in order to teach her little sisters; but Rebecca was so provoked at her for not joining her in her abuse of her husband, that she changed her humour, said John was in the right, and Hester a perverse hypocrite, who only made religion a pretence for being undutiful to her parents. Hester bore all in silence, and committed

ted her cause to him *who judgeth righteously*. It would have been a great comfort to her if she had dared to go to Mrs. Crew, and to have joined in the religious exercises of the evening at school. But her mother refused to let her, saying, it would only harden her heart in mischief. Hester said not a word, but after having put the little ones to bed, and heard them say their prayers out of sight, she went and sat down in her own little loft, and said to herself, it would be pleasant to me to have taught my little sisters to read, I thought it was my duty, for David has said, *Come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* It would have been still more pleasant to have passed the evening at school, because I am still ignorant, and fitter to learn than to teach; but I cannot do either without flying in the face of my mother; God sees fit to-night to change my pleasant duties into a painful trial. I give up my will, and I submit to the will of my father; but when he orders me to commit a known sin, then I dare not do it, because, in so doing, I must disobey my father which is in heaven.

Now it so fell out, that this dispute happened on the very Sunday next before Mrs. Jones's yearly feast. On May-day all the school attended her to church, each in a stuff gown of their own earning, and a cap and white apron of her giving. After church there was an examination made into the learning and behaviour of the scholars; those who were most perfect in their chapters, and who brought the best character for industry, humility, and sobriety, received a Bible, or some other good book.

Now Hester had been a whole year hoarding up her little savings, in order to be ready with a new gown on the May-day feast. She had never got less than two shillings a-week by her spinning, besides working for the family, and earning a trifle by odd jobs,

jobs. This money she faithfully carried to her mother every Saturday night, keeping back, by consent, only two-pence a week towards the gown. The sum was complete, the pattern had long been settled, and Hester had only on the Monday morning to go to the shop, pay her money, and bring home her gown to be made. Her mother happened to go out that morning early to iron in a gentleman's family, where she usually staid a day or two, and Hester was busy putting the house in order before she went to the shop.

On that very Monday there was to be a meeting at the Bell of all the idle fellows in the parish, John Wilmot of course was to be there. Indeed he had accepted a challenge of the blacksmith to a batch at all-fours. The blacksmith was flush of money, John thought himself the best player; and that he might make sure of winning, he resolved to keep himself sober, which he knew was more than the other would do. John was so used to go upon tick for ale, that he got to the door of the Bell before he recollected that he could not keep his word with the gambler without money, and he had not a penny in his pocket, so he sullenly turned homewards. He dared not apply to his wife, as he knew he should be more likely to get a scratched face than a six-pence from her; but he knew that Hester had received two shillings for her last week's spinning on Saturday, and perhaps she might not yet have given it to her mother. Of the hoarded sum he knew nothing. He asked her if she could lend him half-a-crown, and he would pay her next day. Hester, pleased to see him in good-humour, after what had passed the night before, ran up and fetched down her little box, and in the joy of her heart that he now desired something she *could* comply with, without wounding her conscience, cheerfully poured out her whole little stock upon the table.

table. John was in raptures at the sight of three half-crowns and a six-pence, and eagerly seized it, box and all, together with a few hoarded halfpence at the bottom, though he had only asked to borrow half-a-crown. None but one whose heart was hardened by a long course of drunkenness could have taken away the whole, and for such a purpose. He told her she should certainly have it again next morning, and, indeed, intended to pay it, not doubting but he should double the sum. But John over-rated his own skill, or luck, for he lost every farthing to the blacksmith, and sneaked home before midnight, and quietly walked up to-bed. He was quite sober, which Hester thought a good sign. Next morning she asked him, in a very humble way, for the money, which she said she would not have done, but that if the gown was not bought directly it would not be ready in time for the feast. John's conscience had troubled him a a little for what he had done, for when he was not drunk he was not ill-natured, and he stammered out a broken excuse, but owned he had lost the money, and had not a farthing left. The moment Hester saw him mild and kind, her heart was softened, and she begged him not to vex; adding, that she would be contented never to have a new gown as long as she lived, if she could have the comfort of always seeing him come home as sober as he was last night. For Hester did not know that he had refrained from getting drunk, only that he might gamble with a better chance of success, and that when a gamester keeps himself sober, it is not that he may practise a virtue, but that he may commit a worse crime. "I am in-"deed sorry for what I have done," said he; "you "cannot go to the feast, and what will Madam "Jones say?"—"Yes, but I can," said Hester, "for God looks not at the gown, but at the heart, "and I am sure he sees mine full of gratitude at

"hearing

" hearing you talk so kindly; and if I thought my " dear father would change his present evil courses, " I should be the happiest girl at the feast to-morrow." John walked away mournfully, and said to himself, surely there must be something in religion, since it can thus change the heart. Hester was once a pert girl, and now she is as mild as a lamb. She was once an indolent girl, and now she is up with the lark.—She was a vain girl, and would do any thing for a new ribbon; and now she is contented to go in rags to a feast at which every one else will have a new gown. She deprived herself of her gown to give me the money; and yet this very girl, so dutiful in some things, would submit to be turned out of doors, rather than read a loose book at my command, or break the Sabbath. I do not understand this; there must be some mystery in it. All this he said as he was going to work. In the evening he did not go to the Bell: whether it was owing to his new thoughts, or to his not having a penny in his pocket, I will not take upon me positively to say, but I believe it was a little of one, and a little of the other.

As the pattern of the intended gown had long been settled in the family, and as Hester had the money by her, it was looked on as good as bought, so that she was trusted to get it brought home, and made in her mother's absence. Indeed, so little did Rebecca care about the school, that she would not have cared any thing about the gown, if her vanity had not made her wish that her daughter should be the best drest of any girl at the feast. Being from home, as was said before, she knew nothing of the disappointment. On May-day morning, Hester, instead of keeping from the feast, because she had not a new gown, or meanly inventing any excuse for wearing an old one, dressed herself out as neatly as she could in her poor old things, and went to join the school in order to go to church.

church. Whether Hester had formerly indulged a little pride of heart, and talked of this gown rather too much, I am not quite sure; certain it is, there was a great hue and cry made at seeing Hester Wilmot, the neatest girl, the most industrious girl in the school, come to the May-day feast in an old stuff gown, when every other girl was so creditably drest. Indeed, I am sorry to say, there were two or three much too smart for their station, and who had dizened themselves out in very improper finery, which Mrs. Jones made them take off before her. "I mean "this feast," said she, "as a reward of industry and "piety, and not as a trial of skill who can be finest, "and outvie the rest in show. If I do not take care, "my feast will become an encouragement, not to "virtue, but to vanity. I am so great a friend to "decency of apparel, that I even like to see you de-"ny your appetites, that you may be able to come "decently dressed to the house of God. To encou-"rage you to do this, I like to set apart this one day "of innocent pleasure, against which you may be "preparing all the year, by laying aside something "every week towards buying a gown out of your lit-"tle savings. But, let me tell you, that meekness "and an humble spirit is of more value in the sight "of God and good men, than the gayest cotton "gown, or the brightest pink ribbon in the parish."

Mrs. Jones, for all this, was as much surprised as the rest at Hester's mean garb: but such is the power of a good character, that she gave her credit for a right intention, especially as she knew the unhappy state of her family. For it was Mrs. Jones's way (and it is not a bad way) always to wait, and enquire into the truth, before she condemned any person of good character, though appearances were against them. As we cannot judge of people's motives, said she, we may, from ignorance, often condemn their best

best actions, and approve of their worst. It will be always time enough to judge unfavourably, and let us give others credit as long as we can, and then we, in our turn, may expect a favourable judgment from others, and remember who has said, *Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

Hester was no more proud of what she had done for her father, than she was humbled by the meanness of her garb; and notwithstanding Betty Stiles, one of the girls whose finery had been taken away, sneered at her, Hester never offered to clear herself, by exposing her father, though she thought it right secretly to inform Mrs. Jones of what had past. When the examination of the girls began, Betty Stiles was asked some questions on the fourth and fifth commandments which she answered very well. Hester was asked nearly the same questions, and, though she answered them no better than Betty had done, they were all surprised to see Mrs. Jones rise up, and give a handsome Bible to Hester, while she gave nothing to Betty. This girl cried out rather pertly, "Ma-" dam, it is very hard that I have no book; I was as " perfect as Hester."—" I have often told you," said Mrs. Jones, " that religion is not a thing of the " tongue but of the heart. That girl gives me the " best proof that she has learned the fourth com- " mandments to good purpose, who persists in keep- " ing holy the Sabbath-day, though commanded to " break it by a parent whom she loves. And that " girl best proves that she keeps the fifth, who gives " up her own comfort, and clothing, and credit, *to* " *honour and obey her father and mother*, even " though they are not such as she could wish. Bet- " ty Stiles, though she could answer the questions so " readily, went abroad last Sunday, when she should " have been at school, and refused to nurse her sick

" mother, when she could not help herself. Is this
" having learnt these two commandments to any
" good purpose ?"

Farmer Hoskins, who stood by, whispered Mrs. Jones, " Well, madam, now you have convinced " even me of the benefit of religious instruction ; " now I see there is a meaning to it. I thought it " was in at one ear and out at the other, and that a " song was as well as a psalm ; but now I have found " the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I see " your scholars must *do* what they *hear*, and *obey* " what they *learn*. Why, at this rate, they will all " be the better servants for being really godly, and " so I will add a pudding to next year's feast."

The pleasure Hester felt in receiving a new Bible, made her forget that she had on an old gown. She walked to church in a thankful frame ; but how great was her joy, when she saw, among a number of working men, her own father going into church ! As she past by him, she cast on him a look of so much joy and affection, that it brought tears into his eyes, especially when he compared her mean dress with that of the other girls, and thought who had been the cause of it. John, who had not been at church for some years, was deeply struck with the service. The confession with which it opens went to his heart. He felt, for the first time, that he was a *miserable sinner*, *and that there was no health in him.* He now felt compunction for sin in general, though it was only his ill-behaviour to his daughter which had brought him to church. The sermon was such as served to strengthen the impression which the prayers had made; and when it was over, instead of joining the ringers (for the belfrey was the only part of the church John liked, because it usually led to the alehouse) he quietly walked back to his work. It was, indeed, the best day's work he ever made. He could not get out of his

his head the whole day the first words he heard at church: *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* At night, instead of going to the Bell, he went home, intending to ask Hester to forgive him; but as soon as he got to the door, he heard Rebecca scolding his daughter for having brought such a disgrace on the family as to be seen in that old rag of a gown, and insisted on knowing what she had done with the money. Hester tried to keep the secret, but her mother declared she would turn her out of doors if she did not tell the truth. Hester was at last forced to confess she had given it to her father. Unfortunately for poor John, it was at this very moment that he opened the door. The mother now divided her fury between her guilty husband and her innocent child, till from words she fell to blows. John defended his daughter, and received some of the strokes intended for the poor girl. This turbulent scene partly put John's good resolutions to flight, though the patience of Hester did him almost as much good as the sermon he had heard. At length the poor girl escaped up stairs, not a little bruised, and a scene of much violence passed between John and Rebecca. She declared she would not sit down to supper with such a brute, and set off to a neighbour's house, that she might have the pleasure of abusing him the longer. John, whose mind was much disturbed, went up stairs without his supper. As he was passing by Hester's little room he heard her voice, and as he concluded she was venting bitter complaints against her unnatural parents, he stopped to listen, resolving to go in and comfort her. He stopped at the door, for, by the light of the moon, he saw her kneeling by her bedside, and praying so earnestly that she did not hear him. As he made sure she could be praying for nothing but his death, what was

his surprise to hear these words, "O Lord, have mercy upon my dear father and mother, teach me to love them, to pray for them, and do them good; make me more dutiful and more patient, that, adorning the doctrine of God, my Saviour, I may recommend his holy religion, and my dear parents may be brought to love and fear thee, through Jesus Christ."

Poor John, who would never have been hard-hearted if he had not been a drunkard, could not stand this, he fell down on his knees, embraced his child, and begged her to teach him how to pray. He prayed himself as well as he could, and though he did not know what words to use, yet his heart was melted; he owned he was a sinner, and begged Hester to fetch the prayer book, and read over the confession with which he had been so struck at church. This was the pleasantest order she had ever obeyed. Seeing him deeply affected with a sense of sin, she pointed out to him the Saviour of sinners; and in this manner she past some hours with her father, which were the happiest of her life; such a night was worth a hundred cotton, or even silk gowns. In the course of the week Hester read over the confession, and some other prayers, to her father so often that he got them by heart, and repeated them while he was at work. She next taught him the fifty-first psalm. At length he took courage to kneel down and pray before he went to bed. From that time he bore his wife's ill-humour much better than he had ever done, and, as he knew her to be neat, and notable, and saving, he began to think, that if her temper was not quite so bad, his home might still become as pleasant a place to him as ever the Bell had been: but unless she became more tractable he did not know what to do with his long evenings after the little ones were in bed, for he began, once more, to delight in playing with them.

Hester

Hester proposed that she herself should teach him to read an hour every night, and he consented. Rebecca began to storm, from the mere trick she had got of storming ; but finding that he now brought home all his earnings, and that she got both his money and his company (for she had once loved him) she began to reconcile herself to this new way of life. In a few months John could read a psalm. In learning to read it he also got it by heart, and this proved a little store for private devotion, and while he was mowing or reaping he could call to mind a text to cheer his labour. He now went constantly to church, and often dropped in at the school on a Sunday evening to hear their prayers. He expressed so much pleasure at this, that one day Hester ventured to ask him if they should set up family prayer at home ? John said he should like it mightily, but as he could not yet read quite well enough, he desired Hester to try to get a proper book and begin next Sunday night. Hester had bought, of a pious hawker, for three halfpence*, the Book of Prayers, printed for the Cheap Repository, and knew she should there find something suitable.

When Hester read the exhortation at the beginning of this little book, her mother, who sat in the corner, and pretended to be asleep, was so much struck that she could not find a word to say against it. For a few nights, indeed, she continued to sit still, or pretended to rock the young child while her husband and daughter were kneeling at their prayers. She expected John would have scolded her for this, and so perverse was her temper, that she was disappointed at his finding no fault with her. Seeing at

* These prayers may be had also divided into two parts, one fit for private persons, the other for families, price one halfpenny.

last

last that he was very patient, and that though he prayed fervently himself he suffered her to do as she liked, she lost the spirit of opposition for want of something to provoke it. As her pride began to be subdued, some little disposition to piety was awakened in her heart. By degrees she slid down on her knees, though at first it was behind the cradle, or the clock, or in some corner, where she thought they would not see her. Hester rejoiced even in this outward change in her mother, and prayed that God would at last be pleased to touch her heart as he had done that of her father.

As John now spent no idle money, he had saved up a trifle by working over hours; this he kindly offered to Hester to make up for the loss of her gown. Instead of accepting it, Hester told him, that as she herself was young and healthy, she should soon be able to clothe herself out of her own savings, and begged him to make her mother a present of this gown, which he did. It had been a maxim of Rebecca, that it was better not to go to church at all than go in an old gown. She had, however, so far conquered this evil notion, that she had lately gone pretty often. This kindness of the gown touched her not a little, and the first Sunday she put it on, Mr. Simpson happened to preach from this text, *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.* This sermon so affected Rebecca that she never once thought she had her new gown on, till she came to take it off when she went to bed, and that very night, instead of skulking behind, she knelt down by her husband, and joined in prayer with much fervour.

There was one thing sunk deep in Rebecca's mind; she had observed, that since her husband had grown religious he had been so careful not to give her any offence, that he was become scrupulously clean; took off his dirty shoes before he sat down, and was very cautious

cautious not to spill a drop of beer on her shining table. Now it was rather remarkable, that as John grew more neat, Rebecca grew more indifferent to neatness. But both these changes arose from the same cause, the growth of religion in their hearts. John grew cleanly from the fear of giving pain to his wife, while Rebecca grew indifferent from having discovered the sin and folly of an over-anxious care about trifles. When the heart is once given up to God, such vanities in a good degree die of themselves.

Hester continues to grow in grace, and in knowledge. Last Christmas-day she was appointed an under teacher in the school, and many people think that some years hence, if any thing should happen to Mrs. Crew, Hester may be promoted to be head-mistress.

ALLEGORIES.

THE

GRAND ASSIZES, &c.

OR

GENERAL GAOL DELIVERY.

THERE was in a certain country a great king, who was also a judge He was very merciful, but he was also very just; for he used to say, that justice was the foundation of all goodness, and that indiscriminate and misapplied mercy was in fact injustice. His subjects were apt enough, in a general way, to extol his merciful temper, and especially those subjects who were always committing crimes which made them particularly liable to be punished by his justice. This last quality they constantly kept out of sight, till they had cheated themselves into a notion that he was too good to punish at all.

Now

Now it had happened a long time before, that this whole people had broken their allegiance, and had forfeited the king's favour, and had also fallen from a very prosperous state in which he had originally placed them, having one and all become bankrupts. But when they were over head and ears in debt, and had nothing to pay, the king's son most generously took the whole burden of their debts on himself; and, in short, it was proposed that all their affairs should be settled, and their very crimes forgiven, (for they were criminals as well as debtors,) provided only they would shew themselves sincerely sorry for what they had done themselves, and be thankful for what had been done for them. I should however remark, that a book was also given them, in which a true and faithful account of their own rebellion was written; and of the manner of obtaining the king's pardon, together with a variety of directions for their conduct in the time to come; and in this book it was particularly mentioned, that after having lived a certain number of years in a remote part of the same king's country, yet still under his eye and jurisdiction, there should be a *Grand Assizes*, when every one was to be publicly tried for his past behaviour; and after this trial was over, certain heavy punishments were to be inflicted on those who should have still persisted in their rebellion, and certain high premiums were to be bestowed as a gracious reward upon the penitent and obedient.

It may be proper here to notice, that this king's court differed in some respects from our courts of justice, being indeed a sort of court of appeal, to which questions were carried after they had been imperfectly decided in the common courts. And although with us all criminals are tried (and a most excellent mode of trial it is) by a jury of their peers, yet in this king's country the mode was very different; for

for since every one of the people had been in a certain sense criminals, the king did not think it fair to make them judges also. It would, indeed, have been impossible to follow in all respects the customs which prevail with us, for the crimes with which men are charged in our courts are mere *overt acts*, as the lawyers call them, that is, acts which regard the outward behaviour; such as the acts of striking, maiming, stealing, and so forth. But in this king's court it was not merely outward sins, but sins of the heart also which were to be punished. Many a crime, therefore, which was never heard of in the court of King's Bench, or at the Old Bailey, and which indeed could not be cognisable by these courts, was here to be brought to light, and was reserved for this great day. Among these were pride and oppression, and envy, and malice, and revenge, and covetousness, and secret vanity of mind, and evil thoughts of all sorts, and all sinful wishes and desires. When covetousness, indeed, put men on committing robbery, or when malice drove them to an act of murder, then the common courts immediately judged the criminal, without waiting for these Great Assizes; nevertheless, since even a thief and murderer would now and then escape in the common courts, for want of evidence, or through some fault or other of the judge or jury, the escape was of little moment to the poor criminal, for he was sure to be tried again by this great king; and even though the man should have been punished in some sense before, yet he had now a farther and more lasting punishment to fear, unless, indeed, he was one of those, who had obtained (by the means I before spoke of) this great king's pardon. The *sins of the heart*, however, were by far the most numerous sort of sins, which were to come before this great tribunal; and these were to be judged by this great king in person, and by none but himself; because

because he alone possessed a certain power of getting at all secrets.

I once heard of a certain king of Sicily, who built a whispering gallery in the form of an ear, through which he could hear every word his rebellious subjects uttered, though spoken ever so low. But this secret of the king of Sicily was nothing to what this great king possessed; for He had the power of knowing every thought which was conceived in the mind, though it never broke out into words, or proceeded to actions.

Now you may be ready to think, perhaps, that these people were worse off than any others, because they were to be examined so closely, and judged so strictly. Far from it; the king was too just to expect bricks without giving them straw; he gave them, therefore, every help that they needed. He gave them a book of directions, as I before observed; and because they were naturally short-sighted, he supplied them with a glass for reading it, and thus the most dim-sighted might see, if they did not wilfully shut their eyes; but though the king *invited* them to open their eyes, he did not *compel* them; and many remained stone blind all their lives with the book in their hand, because they would not use the glass, nor take the proper means for reading and understanding all that was written for them. The humble and sincere learned in time to see even that part of the book which was least plainly written; and it was observed that the ability to understand it depended more on the heart than the head; an evil disposition blinded the sight, while humility operated like an eye-salve.

Now it happened that those who had been so lucky as to escape the punishment of the lower courts, took it into their heads that they were all very good sort of people, and of course very safe from any danger at this *Great Assize*. This grand intended trial, indeed, had

had been talked off so much, and put off so long, (for it had seemed long at least to these short-sighted people,) that many persuaded themselves it would never take place at all; and far the greater part were living away therefore without ever thinking about it; they went on just as if nothing at all had been done for their benefit; and as if they had no king to please, no king's son to be thankful to, no book to guide themselves by, and as if the Assizes were never to come about.

But with this king *a thousand years were as one day, for he was not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness.*—So at length the solemn period approached. Still, however, the people did not prepare for the solemnity, or rather, they prepared for it much as some of the people in our provincial towns are apt to prepare for the annual assize times; I mean by balls and feastings, and they saw their own trial come on, with as little concern as is felt by the people in our streets, when they see the judge's procession enter the town; they indeed comfort themselves that it is only those in the prisons who are guilty.

But when at last the day came, and every man found that he was to be judged for himself; and that somehow or other, all his secrets were brought out, and that there was now no escape, not even a short reprieve, things began to take a more serious turn. Some of the worst of the criminals were got together debating in an outer court of the grand hall, and there they passed their time, not in compunction and tears, not in comparing their lives with what was required in that book which had been given them, but they derived a fallacious hope by comparing themselves with such as had been still more notorious offenders.

One

One who had grown wealthy by rapine and oppression, but had contrived to keep within the letter of the law, insulted a poor fellow as a thief, because he had stolen a loaf of bread. "You were far wick-"eder than I was," said a citizen to his apprentice, "for you drank and swore at the alehouse every Sun-"day night."—"Yes," said the poor fellow, "but "it was your fault that I did so, for you took no "care of my soul, but spent all your sabbaths in "jaunting abroad or in rioting at home; I might "have learnt, but there was no one to teach me; I "might have followed a good example, but I saw "only bad ones. I sinned against less light than you "did." A drunken journeyman, who had spent all his wages on gin, rejoiced that he had not spent a great estate in bribery at elections, as the lord of his manor had done, while a perjured elector boasted that he was no drunkard, like the journeyman; and the member himself took comfort that he had never *received* the bribes which he had not been ashamed to *offer*.

I have not room to describe the awful pomp of the court, nor the terrible sounding of the trumpet which attended the judge's entrance, nor the sitting of the judge, nor the opening of the books, nor the crowding of the millions, who stood before him. I shall pass over the multitudes who were tried and condemned to dungeons and chains, and eternal fire, and to perpetual banishment from the presence of the king, which always seemed to be the saddest part of the sentence. I shall only notice further, a few who brought some plea of merit, and claimed a right to be rewarded by the king, and even deceived themselves so far as to think that his own book of laws would be their justification.

A thoughtless spendthrift advanced without any contrition, and said, "that he had lived handsome-"ly, and had hated the covetous whom God abhor-"eth;

" eth; that he trusted in that passage of the book " which said, that *covetousness was idolatry;* and " that he therefore hoped for a favourable sentence." Now it proved that this man had not only avoided covetousness, but that he had even left his wife and children in want through his excessive prodigality. The Judge therefore immediately pointed to that place in the book where it is written, *he that provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel. He that liveth in pleasure is dead while he liveth;* " thou," said he, " *in thy lifetime, receivedst thy good things,* " *and now thou must be tormented.*—Then a miser, whom hunger and hoarding had worn to skin and bone, crept forward, and praised the sentence passed on this extravagant youth, " and surely," said he, " since he is condemned, I am the man that may " make some plea to favor—I was never idle or " drunk, I kept my body in subjection. I have " been so self-denying that I am certainly a saint: " I have loved neither father nor mother, nor wife " nor children to excess, in all this I have obeyed " the body of the law."—Then the judge said, But " where are thy works of mercy and thy labours of " love? I see that family which perished in thy sight " last hard winter, while thy barns were overflowing; that poor family were my representatives; " yet they were hungry, and thou gavest them no " meat.—*Go to now, thou rich man, weep and howl* " *for the miseries that are come upon you. Your gold* " *and your silver is cankered, and the rust of them* " *shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your* " *flesh as it were fire.*"

Then came up one with a most self-sufficient air. He walked up boldly, having in one hand the plan of an hospital which he had built, and in the other the drawing of a statue, which was erecting for him in the country that he had just left, and on his forehead appeared,

appeared, in gold letters, the list of all the public charities to which he had subscribed. He seemed to take great pleasure in the condemnation of the miser, and said, " *Lord, when saw I thee hungry and* " *fed thee not, or in prison and visited thee not? I* " *have visited the fatherless and widow in their affliction.*" Here the judge cut him short, by saying, " True, thou didst visit the fatherless, but didst thou " fulfil equally that other part of my command *to* " *keep thyself unspotted from the world.*—No, thou " wast conformed to the world in many of its sinful " customs, *thou didst follow a multitude to do evil;* " *thou didst love the world and the things of the world;* " and the motive to all thy charities was not a re- " gard to me but to thy own credit with thy fellow " men. Thou hast done every thing for the sake of " reputation, and now thou art vainly trusting in thy " deceitful works, instead ofputting all thy trust in " my Son, who has offered himself to be a surety for thee. Where has been that humility and grati- " tude to him which was required of thee? No, thou " wouldst be thine own surety: thou hast trusted in " thyself: thou hast made thy boast of thine own " goodness; thou hast sought after and thou hast en- " joyed the praise of men, and verily I say unto thee, " *thou hast had thy reward.*"

A poor diseased blind cripple, who came from the very hospital which this great man had built, then fell prostrate on his face, crying out, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner!* on which the judge, to the surprise of all, said, " *Well done, good and faithful servant.*" The poor man replied, " Lord, I have done " nothing!"—" But thou hast *suffered well*," said the judge; " thou hast been an example of patience " and meekness and though thou hadst but few ta- " lents, yet thou hast well improved those few; thou " hadst time, this thou didst spend in the humble du- " ties

" ties of thy station, and also in earnest prayer;
" thou didst pray even for that proud founder of
" thine hospital, who never prayed for himself; thou
" wast indeed blind and lame, but it is no where
" said, my son give me thy feet, or thine eyes, but
" *give me thy heart;* and even the few faculties I did
" grant thee, were employed to my glory; with
" thine ears thou didst listen to my word, with thy
" tongue thou didst show forth my praise, *enter thou*
" *into the joy of thy Lord.*"

There were several who came forward, and boasted of some single and particular virtue, in which they had been supposed to excel. One talked of his generosity, another of his courage, and a third of his fortitude; but it proved, on a close examination, that some of those supposed virtues were merely the effect of a particular constitution of body; that others proceeded from a false motive, and that not a few o them were actual vices, since they were carried to excess; and under the pretence of fulfilling one duty, some other duty was lost sight of; in short, these partial virtues were none of them practised in obedience to the will of the king, but merely to please the person's own humour, or to gain praise, and they would not, therefore, stand this day's trial, for *he that had kept the whole law, and yet had wilfully and habitually offended in any one point, was declared guilty of breaking the whole.*

At this moment a sort of thick scales fell from the eyes of the multitude. They could now no longer take comfort, as they had done for so many years, by measuring their neighbour's conduct against their own. Each at once saw himself in his true light, and found, alas! when it was too late, that he should have made the book which had been given him his rule of practice before, since it now proved to be the rule by which he was to be judged. Nay, every one

now thought himself even worse than his neighbour, because, while he only *saw* and *heard* of the guilt of others, he *felt* his own in all its aggravated horror.

To complete their confusion, they were compelled to acknowledge the justice of the judge who condemned them; and also to approve the favourable sentence by which thousands of other criminals had not only their lives saved, but were made happy and glorious beyond all imagination; not for any great merits which they had to produce, but in consequence of their sincere repentance, and their humble acceptance of the pardon offered to them by the king's son. One thing was remarkable, that whilst most of those who were condemned, never expected condemnation, but even claimed a reward for their supposed innocence or goodness, all who were really rewarded and forgiven were sensible that they owed their pardon to a mere act of grace, and they cried out with one voice, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the praise! ! !*

THE

SERVANT MAN TURNED SOLDIER,

OR

THE FAIR WEATHER CHRISTIAN.

AN ALLEGORY.

WILLIAM was a lively young servant, who lived in a *great but very irregular family*. His place was, on the whole, agreeable to him, and suited to his gay thoughtless temper. He found a plentiful table and a good cellar. There was, indeed, a good deal of work to be done, though it was performed with much disorder and confusion. The family in the main were not unkind to him, though they often contradicted and crossed him, especially when things went ill with themselves. This, William never much liked, for he was always fond of having his own way. There was a merry, or rather a noisy and riotous servants' hall; for disorder and quarrels are indeed the usual effects of plenty and unrestrained indulgence. The men were smart, but idle; the maids were

showy, but licentious, and all did pretty much as they liked for a time, but the time was commonly short. The wages were reckoned high, but they were seldom paid, and it was even said by sober people, that the family was insolvent, and never fulfilled any of their flattering engagements, or their most positive promises; but still, notwithstanding their real poverty, things went on with just the same thoughtlessness and splendor, and neither masters or servants looked beyond the jollity of the present hour.

In this unruly family there was little church going, and still less praying at home. They pretended, indeed, in a general way, to believe in the Bible, but it was only an outward profession, few of them read it at all, and even of those who did read it still fewer were governed by it. There was indeed a Bible lying on the table in the great hall, which was kept for the purpose of administering an oath, but was seldom used on any other occasion, and some of the heads of the family were of opinion that this was its only real use, as it might serve to keep the lower parts of it in order.

William, who was fond of novelty and pleasure, was apt to be negligent of the duties of the house. He used to stay out on his errands, and one of his favourite amusements was going to the parade to see the soldiers exercise. He saw with envy how smartly they were dressed, listened with rapture to the music, and fancied that a soldier had nothing to do but to walk to and fro in a certain regular order, to go through a little easy exercise, in short, to live without fighting, fatigue, or danger.

O, said he, whenever he was affronted at home, what a fine thing it must be to be a soldier! to be so well dressed, to have nothing to do but to move to the pleasant sound of fife and drum, and to have so many

many people come to look at one, and admire one. O it must be a fine thing to be a soldier!

Yet when the vexation of the moment was over, he found so much ease and diversion in the great family, it so suited to his low taste and sensual appetites, that he thought no more of the matter. He forgot the glories of a soldier, and eagerly returned to all the mean gratifications of the kitchen. His evil habits were but little attended to by those with whom he lived; his faults, among which were lying and swearing, were not often corrected by the family, who had little objection to those sins, which only offended God and did not much affect their own interest or property. And except that William was obliged to work rather more than he liked, he found little, while he was young and healthy, that was very disagreeable in this service. So he went on, still thinking, however, when things went a little cross, what a fine thing it was to be a soldier! At last one day as he was waiting at dinner, he had the misfortune to let fall a china dish, and broke it all to pieces. It was a curious dish, much valued by the family, as they pretended; this family were indeed apt to set a false fantastic value on things, and not to estimate them by their real worth. The heads of the family, who had generally been rather patient and good-humoured with William, as I said before, for those vices, which though offensive to God did not touch their own pocket, now flew out into a violent passion with him, called him a thousand hard names, and even threatened to horsewhip him for his shameful negligence.

William, in a great fright, for he was a sad coward at bottom, ran directly out of the house to avoid the threatened punishment; and happening just at that very time to pass by the parade where the soldiers chanced to be then exercising, his resolution was taken

taken in a moment. He instantly determined to be no more a slave, as he called it; he would return no more to be subject to the humours of a tyrannical family; no, he was resolved to be free, or at least, if he must serve, he would serve no master but the king.

William, who had now and then happened to hear from the accidental talk of the soldiers, that those who served the great family he had lived with, were slaves to their tyranny and vices, had also heard in the same casual manner, that the service of the king was *perfect freedom*. Now he had taken it into his head to hope that this might be a freedom to do evil, or at least to do nothing, so he thought it was the only place in the world to suit him.

A fine likely young man as William was, had no great difficulty to get enlisted. The few forms were soon settled, he received the bounty money as eagerly as it was offered, took the oaths of allegiance, was joined to the regiment, and heartily welcomed by his new comrades. He was the happiest fellow alive. All was smooth and calm. The day happened to be very fine, and therefore William always reckoned upon a fine day. The scene was gay and lively, the music cheerful, he found the exercise very easy, and he thought there was little more expected from him.

He soon began to flourish away in his talk; and when he met with any one of his old fellow servants, he fell a prating about marches and counter-marches, and blockades, and battles, and seiges and blood, and death, and triumphs, and victories, all at random, for these were words and phrases he had picked up without at all understanding what he said. He had no knowledge, and therefore he had no modesty, he had no experience, and therefore he had no fears.

All

All seemed to go on swimmingly, for he had as yet no trial. He began to think with triumph what a mean life he had escaped from in the old quarrelsome family, and what a happy, honourable life he should have in the army. O there was no life like the life of a soldier!

In a short time, however, war broke out, his regiment was one of the first which was called out to actual and hard service. As William was the most raw of all the recruits he was the first to murmur at the difficulties and hardships, the cold and hunger, the fatigue and danger of being a soldier. O what watchings, and perils, and trials, and hardships, and difficulties he now thought attended a military life! Surely, said he, I could never have suspected all this misery when I used to see the men on parade in our town.

He now found, when it was too late, that all the field-days he used to attend, all the evolutions and exercises which he had observed the soldiers to go through in the calm times of peace and safety, were only meant to fit, train, and qualify them, for the actual service which they were now sent out to perform by the command of the king.

The truth is, William often complained when there was no real hardship to complain of; for the common troubles of life fell out pretty much alike to the great family which William had left, and to the soldiers in the king's army. But the spirit of obedience, discipline, and self-denial of the latter seemed hardships to one of William's loose turn of mind. When he began to murmur, some good old soldier clapped him on the back, saying, cheer up lad, it is a kingdom you are to strive for, if we faint not, henceforth there is laid up for us a great reward, we have the king's word for it man. William observed, that to those who truly believed this, their labours were as nothing,

than the common fortune of war it was which drew from him such bitter groans? "I know something of "surgery," added he, "let me examine your "wound and assist you with such little comforts as "I can."

William at once saw the difference between the soldiers in the king's army and the people in the great family; the latter commonly withdrew their kindness in sickness and trouble, when most wanted, which was just the very time when the others came forward to assist. He told the officer his little history, the manner of his living in the great family, the trifling cause of his quarrelling with it, the slight ground of his entering into the king's service. "Sir," said he, "I quarrelled with the family, and I thought I was "at once fit for the army: I did not know the qua-"lifications it required. I had not reckoned on dis-"cipline, and hardships, and self-denial. I liked "well enough to sing a loyal song, or drink the king's "health, but I find I do not relish working and fight-"ing for him, though I rashly promised even to lay "down my life for his service if called upon, when "I took the bounty money and the oath of allegi-"ance. In short, sir, I find that I long for the ease "and sloth, the merriment and the feasting of my "old service; I find I cannot be a soldier, and, to "speak truth, I was in the very act of deserting "when I was stopped short by the cannon ball. So "that I feel the guilt of desertion, and the misery of "having lost my leg into the bargain."

The officer thus replied; "your state is that of "every worldly, irreligious man. The great family "you served is a just picture of the world. The "wages the world promises to those who are willing "to do its work are high, but the payment is attend-"ed with much disappointment; nay, the world, "like your great family, is in itself insolvent, and

"in

" in its very nature incapable of making good the " promises, and of paying the high rewards, which " it holds out to tempt its credulous followers. The " ungodly world, like your family, cares little for " church, and still less for prayer; and considers the " Bible rather as an instrument to make an oath " binding, in order to keep the vulgar in obedience, " than as containing in itself a perfect rule of faith " and practice, and as a title-deed to heaven. The " generality of men love the world as you did your " service, while it smiles upon them, and gives them " easy work, and plenty of meat and drink; but as " soon as it begins to cross and contradict them, " they get out of humour with it, just as you did " with your service. They then think its drudgery " hard, its rewards low. They find out that it is " high in its expectations from them, and slack in " its payments to them. And they begin to fancy " (because they do not hear religious people murmur " as they do) that there must be some happiness in " religion. The world, which takes no account of " their deeper sins, at length brings them into dis- " credit for some act of imprudence, just as your fa- " mily overlooked your lying and swearing, but " threatened to drub you for breaking a china dish. " Such is the judgment of the world! it particularly " bears with those who only break the laws of God, " but severely punishes the smallest negligence by " which they themselves are injured. The world " sooner pardons the breaking ten commandments " of God than even a china dish of its own.

" After some cross or opposition, worldly men, as " I said before, begin to think how much content " and cheerfulness they remember to have seen in " religious people. They therefore begin to fancy " that religion must be an easy and delightful, as " well as a good thing. They have heard that,

" *her*

" *her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths*
" *are peace ;* and they persuade themselves, that by
" this is meant worldly pleasantness, and sensual
" peace. They resolve at length to try it, to turn
" their back upon the world, to engage in the service
" of God and turn Christians ; just as you resolved
" to leave your old service, to enter into the service
" of the king and turn soldier. But as you quitted
" your place in a passion, so they leave the world in
" a huff. They do not count the cost. They do
" not calculate upon the darling sins, the habitual
" pleasures, the ease and vanities which they under-
" take by their new engagements to renounce, any
" more than you counted what indulgences you were
" going to give up when you quitted the luxuries
" and idleness of your place to enlist in the soldier's
" warfare. They have, as I said, seen Christians
" cheerful, and they mistook the ground of their
" cheerfulness ; they fancied it arose, not because,
" through grace they had conquered difficulties, but
" because they had no difficulties in their passage.
" They fancied that religion found the road smooth,
" whereas it only helps to bear with a rough road
" without complaint. They do not know that these
" Christians are of good cheer, not because the world
" is free from tribulation, but because Christ their
" captain has *overcome the world.* But the irreligi-
" ous man, who has only seen the outside of a Chris-
" tian in his worldly intercourse, knows little of his
" secret conflicts, his trials, his self-denials, his war-
" fare with the world without, and with his own
" corrupt desires within.

" The irreligious man quarrels with the world on
" some such occasion as you did with your place.—
" He now puts on the outward forms and ceremo-
" nies of religion, and assumes the badge of Chris-
" tianity, just as you were struck with the shows of

" a field

" a field day; just as you were pleased with the mu-
" sic and the marching, and put on the cockade and
" the red coat. All seems smooth for a little while.
" He goes through the outward exercises of a Chris-
" tian, a degree of credit attends his new profession,
" but he never suspects there is either difficulty or
" discipline attending it; he fancies religion is a thing
" for talking about, and not a thing of the heart and
" the life. He never suspects that all the psalm-
" singing he joins in, and the sermons he hears, and
" the other means he is using, are only as the exer-
" cises and the evolutions of the soldiers, to fit and
" prepare him for actual service; and that these
" means are no more religion itself, than the exer-
" cises and evolutions of your parade were real war-
" fare.

" At length some trial arises. This nominal
" Christian is called to differ from the world in some
" great point; something happens which may strike
" at his comfort, or his credit, or security. This
" cools his zeal for religion, just as the view of an
" engagement cooled your courage as a soldier.—
" He finds he was only *angry* with the world, he
" was not *tired* of it. He was out of humour with
" the world, not because he had seen through its va-
" nity and emptiness, but because the world was out
" of humour with him. He finds that it is an easy
" thing to be a fair-weather Christian, bold where
" there is nothing to be done, and confident where
" there is nothing to be feared. Difficulties unmask
" him to others; temptations unmask him to him-
" self; he discovers, that though he is a high pro-
" fessor, he is no Christian; just as you found out
" that your red coat and your cockade, your shoul-
" der-knot, and your musket, did not prevent you
" from being a coward.

" Your

"Your misery in the military life, like that of the "nominal Christian, arose from your love of ease, "your cowardice, and your self-ignorance. You "rushed into a new way of life, without trying af- "ter one qualification for it. A total change of "heart and temper were necessary for your new "calling. With new views and new principles, the "soldier's life would have been not only easy but "delightful to you. But while with a new profes- "sion you retained your old nature, it is no wonder "if all discipline seemed intolerable to you.

"The true Christian, like the brave soldier, is "supported under dangers by a strong faith that the "fruits of that victory for which he fights will be "safety and peace. But, alas! the pleasures of this "world are present and visible; the rewards for "which he strives are remote. He therefore fails, "because nothing short of a lively faith can ever "outweigh a strong present temptation, and lead a "man to prefer the joys of conquest to the pleasures "of indulgence."

BETTY BROWN,

THE

ST. GILES's ORANGE GIRL:

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

MRS. SPONGE, THE MONEY-LENDER,

BETTY BROWN, the Orange Girl, was born nobody knows where, and bred nobody knows how. No girl in all the streets of London could drive a barrow more nimbly, avoid pushing against passengers more dextrously, or cry her 'fine China Oranges' in a shriller voice. But then she could neither sew, nor spin, nor knit, nor wash, nor iron, nor read, nor spell. Betty had not been always in so good a situation as that in which we now describe her. She came into the world before so many good gentlemen and ladies began to concern themselves so kindly that the poor might have a little learning. There was no charitable society then, as there is now, to pick up poor friendless children in the streets*, and put them into a good house, and give them meat, and drink, and lodging, and learning, and teach them to get their bread in an honest way, into the bargain.

* The Philanthropic.

Whereas,

Whereas, this now is often the case in London; blessed be God who *has ordered the bounds of our habitation*, and cast our lot in such a country;

The longest thing that Betty can remember is, that she used to crawl up out of a night cellar, stroll about the streets, and pick cinders from the scavengers' carts. Among the ashes she sometimes found some ragged gauze and dirty ribbons; with these she used to dizen herself out, and join the merry bands on the first of May. This was not however quite fair, as she did not lawfully belong either to the female dancers, who foot it gaily round the garland, or to the sooty tribe, who, on this happy holiday, forget their whole year's toil in Portman square, cheered by the tender bounty of her whose wit has long enlivened the most learned, and whose taste and talents long adorned the most polished societies. Betty, however, often got a few scraps, by appearing to belong to both parties. But as she grew bigger, and was not an idle girl, she always put herself in the way of doing something. She would run of errands for the footmen, or sweep the door for the maid of any house where she was known; she would run and fetch some porter, and never was once known either to sip a drop by the way, or steal the pot. Her quickness and fidelity in doing little jobs, got her into favour with a lazy cook-maid who was too apt to give away her master's cold meat and beer, not to those who were most in want, but to those who waited upon her, and did the little things for her which she ought to have done herself.

The cook, who found Betty a dextrous girl, soon employed her to sell ends of candles, pieces of meat and cheese, and lumps of butter, or any thing else she could crib from the house. These were all carried to her friend Mrs. Sponge, who kept a little shop, and a kind of eating-house for poor working people,

people, not far from the Seven Dials. She also bought, as well as sold, many kinds of second hand things, and was not scrupulous to know whether what she bought was honestly come by, provided she could get it for a sixth part of what it was worth. But if the owner presumed to ask for its real value, then she had sudden qualms of conscience, instantly suspected the things were stolen, and gave herself airs of honesty, which often took in poor silly people, and gave her a sort of half reputation among the needy and the ignorant, whose friend she hypocritically pretended to be.

To this artful woman Betty carried the cook's pilferings; and as Mrs. Sponge would give no great price for these in money, the cook was willing to receive payment for her eatables in Mrs. Sponge's drinkables; for she dealt in all kinds of spirits. I shall only just remark here, that one receiver, like Mrs. Sponge, makes many pilferers, who are tempted to commit these petty thieveries, by knowing how easy it is to dispose of them at such iniquitous houses.

Betty was faithful to both her employers, which is extraordinary, considering the greatness of the temptation, and her utter ignorance of good and evil. One day she ventured to ask Mrs. Sponge, if she could not assist her to get into a more settled way of life. She told her, that when she rose in the morning she never knew where she should lie at night, nor was she ever sure of a meal before-hand. Mrs. Sponge asked her what she thought herself fit for; Betty, with fear and trembling, said, there was one trade for which she thought herself qualified, but she had not the ambition to look so high; it was far above her humble views; this was, to have a barrow and sell fruit, as several other of Mrs. Sponge's customers did, whom she had often looked up to

with envy, little expecting herself even to attain so independent a station.

Mrs. Sponge was an artful woman. Bad as she was, she was always aiming at something of a character; this was a great help to her trade. While she watched keenly to make every thing turn to her own profit, she had a false fawning way of seeming to do all she did out of pity and kindness to the distressed; and she seldom committed an extortion, but she tried to make the persons she cheated believe themselves highly obliged to her kindness. But thus pretending to be their friend, she gained their confidence; and she grew rich herself, while they thought she was only shewing favour to them. Various were the arts she had of getting rich; and the money she got by grinding the poor, she spent in the most luxurious living; while she would haggle with her hungry customers for a farthing, she would spend pounds on the most costly delicacies for herself.

Mrs. Sponge, laying aside that haughty look and voice, well known to such as had the misfortune to be in her debt, put on the hypocritical smile and soft canting tone, which she always assumed, when she meant to flatter her superiors, or take in her dependents. "Betty," said she, "I am re-"solved to stand your friend. These are sad times "to be sure. Money is money now. Yet I am re-"solved to put you into a handsome way of living. "You shall have a barrow, and well furnished too." Betty could not have felt more joy or gratitude, if she had been told that she should have a coach. "O, madam!" said Betty it is impossible. I have "not a penny in the world towards helping me to "set up." "I will take care of that," said Mrs. Sponge; "only you must do as I bid you. You "must pay me interest for my money; and you "will, of course, be glad also to pay so much every "night

"night for a nice hot supper which I get ready "*quite out of kindness*, for a number of poor work- "ing people. This will be a great comfort for "such a friendless girl as you, for my victuals and "drink are the best, and my company the mer- "riest of any house in all St. Giles's." Betty thought all this only so many more favours, and courtesying to the ground, said, "To be sure, "ma'am, and thank you a thousand times into the "bargain. I never could hope for such a rise in "life."

Mrs. Sponge knew what she was about. Betty, was a lively girl, who had a knack at learning any thing; and so well looking through all her dirt and rags, that there was little doubt she would get custom. A barrow was soon provided, and five shillings put into Betty's hands. Mrs. Sponge kindly condescended to go to shew her how to buy the fruit; for it was a rule with this prudent gentlewoman, and one from which she never departed, that no one should cheat but herself; and suspecting from her own heart the fraud of all other dealers, she was seldom guilty of the weakness of being imposed upon.

Betty had never possessed such a sum before. She grudged to lay it out all at once, and was ready to fancy she could live upon the capital. The crown, however, was laid out to the best advantage. Betty was carefully taught in what manner to cry her oranges; and received many useful lessons how to get off the bad with the good, and the stale with the fresh. Mrs. Sponge also lent her a few bad sixpences, for which she ordered her to bring home good ones at night. Betty stared. Mrs Sponge said, "Betty, those who would get money, "must not be too nice about trifles. Keep one of "these sixpences in your hand, and if an ignorant "young customer gives you a good sixpence, do

" you immediately slip it into your other hand,
" and give him the bad one, declaring, that it is the
" very one you have just received, and be ready to
" swear that you have not an other sixpence in the
" world. You must also learn how to treat different
" sorts of customers. To some you may put off,
" with safety, goods which would be quite unsa-
" leable to others. Never offer bad fruit, Betty, to
" those who know better; never waste the good on
" those who may be put off with worse; put good
" oranges at top to attract the eye, and the mouldy
" ones under for sale."

Poor Betty had not a nice conscience, for she had never learnt that grand, but simple rule of all moral obligation. *Never do that to another which you would not have another do to you.* She set off with her barrow, as proud and as happy as if she had been set up in the finest shop in Covent Garden. Betty had a sort of natural good temper, which made her unwilling to impose, but she had no principle which told her it was a sin to do so. She had such good success, that, when night came, she had not an orange left. With a light heart, she drove her empty barrow to Mrs. Sponge's door. She went in with a merry face, and threw down on the counter every farthing she had taken. " Betty," said Mrs. Sponge, " I have a right to it all, as it was got by
" my money. But I am too generous to take it.
" I will therefore only take sixpence for this day's
" use of my five shillings. This is a most reason-
" able interest, and I will lend you the same sum
" to trade with to-morrow, and so on; you only
" paying me sixpence for the use of it every night,
" which will be a great bargain to you. You must
" also pay me my price every night for your supper,
" and you shall have an excellent lodging above
" stairs; so you see every thing will now be pro-
" vided

"vided for you in a genteel manner, through my "generosity *."

Poor Betty's gratitude blinded her so completely, that she forgot to calculate the vast proportion which this generous benefactress was to receive out of her little gains. She thought herself a happy creature, and went in to supper with a number of others of her own class. For this supper, and for more porter and gin than she ought to have drunk, Betty was forced to pay so high, that it ate up all the profits of the day, which, added to the daily interest, made Mrs. Sponge a rich return for her five shillings.

Betty was reminded again of the gentility of her new situation, as she crept up to bed in one of Mrs. Sponge's garrets, five stories high. This loft, to be sure, was small, and had no window, but what it wanted in light was made up in company, as it had three beds, and thrice as many lodgers. Those gentry had one night, in a drunken frolic, broken down the door, which happily had never been replaced; for, since that time, the lodgers had died much seldomer of infectious distempers, than when they were close shut in. For this lodging Betty paid twice as much to her *good friend* as she would have done to a stranger. Thus she continued, with great industry and a thriving trade, as poor as on the first day, and not a bit nearer to saving money enough to buy her even a pair of shoes, though her feet were nearly on the ground.

One day, as Betty was driving her barrow through a street near Holborn, a lady from a window called

* For an authentic account of numberless frauds of this kind, see that very useful work of Mr. Colquhoun on the *Police of the Metropolis of London.*

out

out to her that she wanted some oranges. While the servant went to fetch a plate, the lady entered into some talk with Betty, having been struck with her honest countenance and civil manner. She questioned her as to her way of life, and the profits of her trade; and Betty, who had never been so kindly treated before by so genteel a person, was very communicative. She told her little history as far as she knew it, and dwelt much on the generosity of Mrs. Sponge, in keeping her in her house, and trusting her with so large a capital as five shillings. At first it sounded like a very good-natured thing; but the lady, whose husband was one of the justices of the new police, happened to know more of Mrs. Sponge than was good, which led her to inquire still further. Betty owned, that to be sure it was not all clear profit, for that besides that the high price of the supper and bed ran away with all she got, she paid sixpence a-day for the use of the five shillings. "And "how long have you done this? said the lady. "About a year madam."

The lady's eyes were at once opened. "My poor "girl," said she, "do you know that you have al"ready paid for that single five shillings the enor"mous sum of 7l. 10s.? I believe it is the most "profitable five shillings Mrs. Sponge ever laid out." —"O, no, madam," said the girl, "that good "gentlewoman does the same kindness to ten or "twelve other poor friendless creatures like me."— "Does she so?" said the lady, "then I never heard "of a more lucrative trade than this woman car"ries on, under the mask of charity, at the expence "of her poor deluded fellow-creatures."

"But, madam," said Betty, who did not comprehend this lady's arithmetic, "what can I do? "I now contrive to pick up a morsel of bread with"out begging or stealing. Mrs. Sponge has been "very

"very good to me; and I don't see how I can help "myself."

"I will tell you," said the lady: "if you will "follow my advice, you may not only maintain "yourself honestly, but independently. Only "oblige yourself to live hard for a little time, till "you have saved five shillings out of your own ear- "nings. Give up that expensive supper at night, "drink only one pint of porter, and no gin at all. "As soon as you have scraped together the five "shillings, carry it back to your false friend; and "if you are industrious, you will, at the end of "the year, have saved 7l. 10s. If you can make "a shift to live now, when you have this heavy in- terest to pay, judge how things will mend when "your capital becomes your own. You will put "some clothes on your back; and, by leaving the "use of spirits, and the company in which you "drink them, your health, your morals, and your "condition, will mend."

The lady did not talk thus to save her money. She would willingly have given the girl the five shillings; but she thought it was beginning at the wrong end. She wanted to try her. Besides, she knew there was more pleasure, as well as honour, in possessing five shillings of one's own saving, than of another's giving. Betty promised to obey. She owned she had got no good by the company or the liquor at Mrs. Sponge's. She promised that very night to begin saving the expence of the supper; and that she would not taste a drop of gin till she had the five shillings beforehand. The lady, who knew the power of good habits, was contented with this, thinking, that if the girl could abstain for a certain time, it would become easy to her. She therefore, at present, said little about the *sin* of drinking, and only insisted on the *expence* of it.

In

In a very few weeks Betty had aved up the five shillings. She went to carry back this money with great gratitude to Mrs. Sponge. This kind friend began to abuse her most unmercifully. She called her many hard names, not fit to repeat, for having forsaken the supper, by which she swore she herself got nothing at all; but as she had the charity to dress it for such beggarly wretches, she insisted they should pay for it, whether they eat it or not. She also brought in a heavy score for lodging, though Betty had paid for it every night, and had given notice of her intending to quit her. By all these false pretences, she got from her not only her own five shillings, but all the little capital with which Betty was going to set up for herself. All was not sufficient to answer her demands, she declared she would send her to prison; but while she went to call a constable, Betty contrived to make off.

With a light pocket and a heavy heart, she went back to the lady; and with many tears told her sad story. The lady's husband the justice, condescended to listen to Betty's tale. He said Mrs. Sponge had long been upon his books as a receiver of stolen goods. Betty's evidence strengthened his bad opinion of her. "This petty system of usury," said the magistrate, "may be thought trifling, but it "will no longer appear so, when you reflect, that "if one of these female sharpers possesses a capital "of seventy shillings, or 3l. 10s. with fourteen "steady regular customers, she can realize a fixed "income of one hundred guineas a-year. Add to "this the influence such a loan gives her over these "friendless creatures, by compelling them to eat at "her house, or lodge, or buy liquors, or by taking "their pawns, and you will see the extent of the "evil. I pity these poor victims: you, Betty, shall "point out some of them to me. I will endeavour

"to

" to open their eyes on their own bad management. " It is not by giving to the importunate shillings " and half crowns, and turning them adrift to wait " for the next accidental relief, that much good is " done. It saves trouble, indeed, but that trouble " being the most valuable part of charity ought not " to be spared; at least by those who have leisure " as well as affluence. It is one of the greatest acts " of kindness to the poor to mend their œconomy, " and to give them right views of laying out their " little money to advantage. These poor blinded " creatures look no farther than to be able to pay " this heavy interest every night, and to obtain the " same loan on the same hard terms the next-day. " Thus are they kept in poverty and bondage all " their lives; but I hope as many as hear of this will " get on a better plan, and I shall be ready to help " any who are willing to help themselves." This worthy magistrate went directly to Mrs. Sponge's with proper officers; and he soon got to the bottom of many iniquities. He not only made her refund poor Betty's money, but committed her to prison for receiving stolen goods, and various other offences, which may, perhaps, make the subject of another history.

Betty was now set up in trade to her heart's content. She had found the benefit of leaving off spirits, and she resolved to drink them no more. The first fruits of this resolution was, that in a fortnight she bought her a new pair of shoes; and as there was now no deduction for interest, or for gin, her earnings became considerable. The lady made her a present of a gown and a hat, on the easy condition that she should go to church. She accepted the terms, at first rather as an act of obedience to the lady, than from a sense of higher duty. But she soon began to go from a better motive. This

constant

constant attendance at church, joined to the instructions of the lady, opened a new world to Betty. She now heard, for the first time, that she was a sinner; that God had given a law which was holy, just, and good; that she had broken this law, had been a swearer, a sabbath-breaker, and had lived *without God in the world.* All this was sad news to Betty; she knew, indeed, before, that there were sinners, but she thought they were only to be found in the prisons, or at Botany Bay, or in those mournful carts which she had sometimes followed with her barrow, with the unthinking crowd, to Tyburn. She was deeply struck with the great truths revealed in the Scripture, which were quite new to her; her heart smote her, and she became anxious *to flee from the wrath to come.* She was desirous of improvement, and said, "she would give up all the profits of her "barrow, and go into the hardest service, rather "than live in sin and ignorance."

Betty," said the lady, "I am glad to see you so "well disposed, and will do what I can for you. "Your present way of life, to be sure, exposes you "to much danger; but the trade is not unlawful in "itself, and we may please God in any calling, pro-"vided it be not a dishonest one. In this great "town there must be barrow-women to sell fruit. "Do you, then, instead of forsaking your business, "set a good example to those in it, and shew them, "that though a dangerous trade, it need not be a "wicked one. Till Providence points out some sa-"fer way of getting your bread, let your compani-"ons see, that it is possible to be good even in this. "Your trade being carried on in the open street, "and your fruit bought in an open shop, you are "not so much obliged to keep sinful company as "may be thought. Take a garret in an honest "house, to which you may go home in safety at "night.

" night. I will give you a bed and a few necessa-
" ries to furnish your room; and I will also give you
" a constant Sunday's dinner. A barrow-woman,
" blessed be God and our good laws, is as much her
" own mistress on Sundays as a duchess; and the
" church and the Bible are as much open to her.
" You may soon learn as much of religion as you
" are expected to know. A barrow-woman may
" pray as heartily morning and night, and serve
" God as acceptably all day, while she is carrying on
" her little trade, as if she had her whole time to
" spare.

" To do this well, you must mind the following

" RULES FOR RETAIL DEALERS:

" *Resist every temptation to cheat.*
" *Never impose bad goods on false pretences.*
" *Never put off bad money for good.*
" *Never use prophane or uncivil language.*

" Never swear your goods cost so much, when
" you know it is false. By so doing you are guilty
" of two sins in one breath, a lie and an oath.

" To break these rules, will be your chief tempta-
" tion. God will mark how you behave under them,
" and will reward or punish you accordingly. These
" temptations will be as great to you, as higher tri-
" als are to higher people; but you have the same
" God to look to for strength to resist them as they
" have. You must pray to him to give you this
" strength. You shall attend a Sunday-school,
" where you will be taught these good things; and
" I will promote you as you shall be found to de-
" serve."

Poor Betty here burst into tears of joy and grati-
tude, crying out, " What! shall such a poor friend-
" less

"less creature as I be treated so kindly and learn to "read the word of God too? Oh, madam what a "lucky chance brought me to your door!"—"Bet-"ty," said the lady, "what you have just said, "shews the need you have of being better taught; "there is no such thing as chance; and we offend "God when we call that luck or chance which is "brought about by his will and pleasure. None of "the events of your life have happened by chance; "but all have been under the direction of a good "and kind Providence. He has permited you to "experience want and distress, that you might ac-"knowledge his hand in your present comfort and "prosperity. Above all, you must bless his good-"ness in sending you to me, not only because I have "been of use to you in your worldly affairs, but be-"cause he has enabled me to shew you the danger "of your state from sin and ignorance, and to put "you in a way to know his will and to keep his "commandments, which is eternal life."

How Betty, by industry and piety, rose in the world, till at length she came to keep that handsome sausage-shop near the Seven Dials, and was married to that very hackney-coachman, whose history and honest character may be learned from that ballad of the Cheap Repository which bears his name, may be shewn hereafter.

BLACK GILES

THE POACHER;

CONTAINING

Some Account of a Family who had rather live by their Wits than their Work.

PART I.

POACHING GILES lives on the borders of one of those great moors in Somersetshire. Giles, to be sure, has been a sad fellow in his time; and it is none of his fault if his whole family do not end their career either at the gallows or at Botany Bay. He lives at that mud cottage with the broken windows, stuffed with dirty rags, just beyond the gate which divides the Upper from the Lower Moor. You may know the house at a good distance by the ragged tiles on the roof, and the loose stones which are ready to drop out from the chimney; though a short ladder, a hod of mortar, and half an hour's leisure time, would have prevented all this, and made the little dwelling tight enough. But as Giles had never learnt any thing

that

that was good, so he did not know the value of such useful sayings, as, that "a tile in time saves nine."

Besides this, Giles fell into that common mistake, that a beggarly looking cottage, and filthy ragged children raised most compassion, and of course drew most charity. But as cunning as he was in other things, he was out in his reckoning here; for it is neatness, housewifery, and a decent appearance, which draw the kindness of the rich and charitable, while they turn away disgusted from filth and laziness; not out of pride, but because they see that it is next to impossible to mend the condition of those who degrade themselves by dirt and sloth; and few people care to help those who will not help themselves.

The common on which Giles's hovel stands, is quite a deep marsh in a wet winter: but in summer it looks green and pretty enough. To be sure it would be rather convenient when one passes that way in a carriage, if one of the children would run out and open the gate: but instead of any *one* of them running out as soon as they hear the wheels, which would be quite time enough, what does Giles do, but set all his ragged brats, with dirty faces, matted locks, and naked feet and legs, to lie all day upon a sand-bank hard by the gate, waiting for the slender chance of what may be picked up from travellers. At the sound of a carriage, a whole covey of the these little scarecrows start up, rush to the gate, and all at once thrust out their hats and aprons; and for fear this, together with the noise of their clamorous begging, should not sufficiently frighten the horses, they are very apt to let the gate slap full against you, before you are half-way through, in their eager scuffle to snatch from each other the halfpence which you may have thrown out to them. I know two ladies who were one day very near being killed by these abominable tricks.

Thus

Thus five or six little idle creatures, who might be earning a trifle by knitting at home, who might be useful to the public by working in the field, and who might assist their families by learning to get their bread twenty honest ways, are suffered to lie about all day, in the hope of a few chance half-pence, which, after all, they are by no means sure of getting. Indeed, when the neighbouring gentleman found out that opening the gate was the family trade, they soon left off giving any thing. And I myself, though I used to take out a penny ready to give, had there been only one to receive it, when I see a whole family established in so beggarly a trade, quietly put it back again in my pocket, and give nothing at all. And so few travellers pass that way, that sometimes, after the whole family have lost a day, their gains do not amount to two-pence.

As Giles had a far greater taste for living by his wits than his work, he was at one time in hopes that his children might have got a pretty penny by *tumbling* for the diversion of travellers, and he set about training them in that indecent practice; but unluckily the moors being level, the carriages travelled faster than the children tumbled. He envied those parents who lived on the London road, over the Wiltshire Downs, which Downs being very hilly, it enables the tumbler to keep pace with the traveller, till he sometimes extorts from the light and unthinking a reward instead of a reproof. I beg leave, however, to put all gentlemen and ladies in mind that such tricks are a kind of apprenticeship to the trades of begging and thieving; and that nothing is more injurious to good morals, than to encourage the poor in any habits which may lead them to live upon chance.

Giles, to be sure, as his children grew older, began to train them to such other employments as the idle habits they had learned at the gate very properly qualified

lified them for. The right of common which some of the poor cottagers have in that part of the country, and which is doubtless a considerable advantage to many, was converted by Giles into the means of corrupting his whole family; for his children, as soon as they grew too big for the trade of begging at the gate, were promoted to the dignity of thieving on the moor. Here he kept two or three asses, miserable beings, which, if they had the good fortune to escape an untimely death by starving, did not fail to meet with it by beating. Some of the biggest boys were sent out with these lean and galled animals to carry sand or coals about the neighbouring towns. Both sand and coals were often stolen before they got them to sell; or if not, they always took care to cheat in selling them. By long practice in this art, they grew so dextrous, that they could give a pretty good guess how large a coal they could crib out of every bag before the buyer would be likely to miss it.

All their odd time was taken up under the pretence of watching their asses on the moor, or running after five or six half-starved geese: but the truth is, these boys were only watching for an opportunity to steal an odd goose of their neighbour's, while they pretended to look after their own. They used also to pluck the quills or the down from these poor live creatures, or half milk a cow before the farmer's maid came with her pail. They all knew how to calculate to a minute what time to be down in a morning to let out their lank hungry beasts, which they had turned over-night into the farmer's field to steal a little good pasture. They contrived to get there just time enough to escape being caught in replacing the stakes they had pulled out for the cattle to get over. For Giles was a prudent long-headed fellow; and wherever he stole food for his colts, took care never to steal stakes from the hedges at the same place. He had

had sense enough to know that the gain did not make up for the danger; he knew that a loose faggot, pulled from a neighbour's pile of wood after the family were gone to bed, answered the end better, and was not half the trouble.

Among the many trades which Giles professed, he sometimes practised that of a rat-catcher; but he was addicted to so many tricks, that he never followed the same trade long; for detection will, sooner or later, follow the best concerted villainy. Whenever he was sent for to a farm-house, his custom was to kill a few of the old rats, always taking care to leave a little stock of young ones alive sufficient to keep up the "breed; for," said he, "if I were to be such a "fool as to clear a house or a barn at once, how "would my trade be carried on?" And where any barn was over-stocked, he used to borrow a few rats from thence just to people a neighbouring granary which had none; and he might have gone on till now, had he not unluckily been caught one evening emptying his cage of rats under parson Wilson's barn-door.

This worthy minister, Mr. Wilson, used to pity the neglected children of Giles, as much as he blamed the wicked parents. He one day picked up Dick, who was far the best of Giles's bad boys. Dick was loitering about in a field behind the parsons garden in search of a hen's nest, his mother having ordered him to bring home a few eggs that night, by hook or by crook, as Giles was resolved to have some pancakes for supper, though he knew that eggs were a penny a-piece. Mr. Wilson had long been desirous of snatching some of this vagrant family from ruin; and his chief hopes were bent on Dick, as the least hackneyed in knavery. He had once given him a new pair of shoes, on his promising to go to school next Sunday; but no sooner had Rachel, the boy's

mother, got the shoes into her clutches, than she pawned them for a bottle of gin, and ordered the boy to keep out of the parson's sight, and to be sure to play his marbles on Sunday for the future at the other end of the parish, and not near the church-yard. Mr. Wilson, however, picked up the boy once more; for it was not his way to despair of any body. Dick was just going to take to his heels, as usual, for fear the old story of the shoes should be brought forward; but finding he could not get off, what does he do but run into a little puddle of muddy water which lay between him and the parson, that the sight of his naked feet might not bring on the dreaded subject. Now it happened that Mr. Wilson was planting a little field of beans, so he thought this a good opportunity to employ Dick; and he told him he had got some pretty easy work for him. Dick did as he was bid; he willingly went to work, and readily began to plant his beans with dispatch and regularity, according to the directions given him.

While the boy was busily at work by himself, Giles happened to come by, having been skulking round the back way to look over the parson's garden wall, to see if there was any thing worth climbing over for on the ensuing night. He spied Dick, and began to scold him for working for the stingy old parson; for Giles had a natural antipathy to whatever belonged to the church. "What has he promised "thee a-day?" said he; "little enough I dare say." "He is not to pay me by the day," said Dick, "but "says he will give me so much when I have planted "this peck, and so much for the next." "Oh, oh! "that alters the case," said Giles." "One may, "indeed, get a trifle by this sort of work. I hate "your regular day-jobs, where one can't well avoid "doing one's work for one's money. Come, give "me a handful of the beans; I will teach thee how to

"plant

" plant when thou art paid for planting by the peck,
" All we have to do in that case is to dispatch the work
" as fast as we can, and get rid of the beans with
" all speed; and as to the seed coming up or not,
" that is no business of our's; we are paid for plant-
" ing, not for growing. At the rate thou goest on
" thou would'st not get sixpence to-night. Come
" along, bury away." So saying, he took his hate ful of the seed, and where Dick had been ordered to set one bean, Giles buried a dozen: of course the beans were soon out. But though the peck was emptied, the ground was unplanted: But cunning Giles knew this could not be found out till the time when the beans might be expected to come up, " and
" then, Dick," says he, " the snails and the mice
" may go shares in the blame; or we can lay the
" fault on the rooks or the black-birds." So saying, he sent the boy into the parsonage to receive his pay, taking care to secure about a quarter of the peck of beans for his own colt. He put both bag and beans into his own pocket to carry home, bidding Dick tell Mr. Wilson that he had planted the beans and lost the bag.

In the mean time Giles's other boys were busy in emptying the ponds and trout-streams in the neighbouring manor. They would steal away the carp and tench when they were no bigger than gudgeons. By this untimely depredation they plundered the owner of his property, without enriching themselves. But the pleasure of mischief was reward enough. These, and a hundred other little thieveries, they committed with such dexterity, that old Tim Crib, whose son was transported last assizes for sheep-stealing, used to be often reproaching his boys, that Giles's sons were worth a hundred of such blockheads as he had; for scarce a night past but Giles had some little comfortable thing for supper

which his boys had pilfered in the day, while his undutiful dogs never stole any thing worth having. Giles, in the mean time, was busy in his way, but as busy as he was in laying nets, starting coveys, and training dogs he always took care that his depredations should not be confined merely to game.

Giles's boys had never seen the inside of a church since they were christened, and the father thought he knew his own interest better than to force them to it; for church-time was the season of their harvest. Then the hen's nests were searched, a stray duck was clapped under the smock frock, the tools which might have been left by chance in a farm-yard were picked up, and all the neighbouring pigeon-houses were thinned, so that Giles used to boast to tawny Rachel his wife, that Sunday was to them the most profitable day in the week. With her it was certainly the most laborious day, as she always did her washing and ironing on the Sunday morning, it being, as she said, the only leisure day she had, for on the other days she went about the country telling fortunes, and selling dream books and wicked songs. Neither her husband's nor her children's clothes were ever mended, and if Sunday, her idle day, had not come about once in every week, it is likely they would never have been washed neither. You might, however, see her as you were going to church smoothing her own rags on her best red cloak, which she always used for her ironing-cloth on Sundays, for her cloak when she travelled, and for her blanket at night; such a wretched manager was Rachel! Among her other articles of trade, one was to make and sell peppermint, and other distilled waters. These she had the cheap art of making without trouble and without expence, for seh made them without herbs and

without

without a still. Her way was, to fill so many quart bottles with plain water, putting a spoonful of mint water in the mouth of each; these she corked down with rosin, carrying to each customer a phial of real distilled water to taste by way of sample. This was so good that her bottles were commonly bought up without being opened; but if any suspicion arose, and she was forced to uncork a bottle, by the few drops of distilled water lying at top, she even then escaped detection, and took care to get out of reach before the bottle was opened a second time. She was too prudent ever to go twice to the same house.

The upright Magistrate.

THERE is hardly any pretty mischief that is not connected with the life of a poacher. Mr. Wilson was aware of this; he was not only a pious clergyman, but an upright justice. He used to say, that people who were truly conscientious, must be so in small things as well as in great ones, or they would destroy the effect of their own precepts, and their example would not be of general use. For this reason he never would accept of a hare or a partridge from any unqualified person in his parish. He did not content himself with shuffling the thing off by asking no questions, and pretending to take it for granted in a general way that the game was fairly come at; but he used to say, that by receiving the booty he connived at a crime, made himself a sharer in it, and if he gave a present to the man who bought it, he even tempted him to repeat the fault.

One day poor Jack Weston, an honest fellow in the neighbourhood, whom Mr. Wilson had kindly visited

visited and relieved in a long sickness, from which he was but just recovered, was brought before him as he was sitting on the Justice's bench; Jack was accused of having knocked down a hare; and of all the birds in the air, who should the informer be but black Giles the poacher? Mr. Wilson was grieved at the charge, he had a great regard for Jack, but he had still a greater regard for the law. The poor fellow pleaded guilty. He did not deny the fact, but said he did not consider it as a crime, for he did not think game was private property, and he owned he had a strong temptation for doing what he had done, which he hoped would plead in his excuse. The Justice desired to know what this temptation was. "Sir," said the poor fellow, "you know I "was given over this spring in a bad fever. I had "no friend in the world but you sir. Under God "you saved my life by your charitable relief; and "I trust also you may have helped to save my soul "by your prayers and your good advice; for, by "the grace of God, I have turned over a new leaf "since that sickness."

"I know I can never make you amends for all "your goodness, but I thought it would be some "comfort to my full heart if I could but once give "you some little token of my gratitude. So I had "trained a pair of nice turtle doves for Madam "Wilson, but they were stolen from me, sir, and I "do suspect Black Giles stole them. Yesterday, "morning, sir, as I was crawling out to my work "for I am still very weak, a fine hare ran across my "path. I did not stay to consider whether it was "wrong to kill a hare, but I felt it was right to "shew my gratitude; so, sir, without a moment's "thought I did knock down the hare, which I was "going to carry to your worship, because I knew "madam was fond of hare. I am truly sorry for

"my

" my fault, and will submit to whatever punishment " your worship may please to inflict."

Mr. Wilson was much moved with this honest confession, and touched with the poor fellow's gratitude. What added to the effect of the story, was the weak condition and pale sickly looks of the offender. But this worthy magistrate never suffered his feelings to bias his integrity; he knew that he did not sit on that bench to indulge pity, but to administer justice; and, while he was sorry for the offender, he would never justify the offence. " John," said he, " I am sur- " prised that you could for a moment forget that I " never accept any gift which causes the giver to " break a law. On Sunday I teach you from the " pulpit the laws of God, whose minister I am. " At present I fill the chair of the magistrate, to " enforce and execute the laws of the land. Be- " tween those and the others there is more connex- " ion than you are aware. I thank you, John, for your " affection to me, and I admire your gratitude; but " I must not allow either affection or gratitude to be " brought as a plea for a wrong action. It is not " your business nor mine, John, to settle whether " the game laws are good or bad. Till they are " repealed we must obey them. Many, I doubt " not, break these laws through ignorance, and " many, I am certain, who would not dare to steal " a goose or a turkey, make no scruple of knocking " down a hare or a partridge. You will hereafter " think yourself happy that this your first attempt " has proved unsuccessful, as I trust you are too " honest a fellow ever to intend to turn poacher. " With poaching much moral evil is connected; a " habit of nightly depredation; a custom of prow- " ling in the dark for prey produces in time a disre- " lish for honest labour. He whose first offence was " committed without much thought or evil intention,

" if

PART II.

History of Widow Brown's Apple-Tree.

I THINK my readers got so well acquainted last month with Black Giles the poacher, that they will not expect, this month, to hear any great good, either of Giles himself, his wife Rachel, or any of their family. I am sorry to expose their tricks, but it is their fault, not mine. If I pretend to speak about people at all, I must tell the truth. I am sure, if folks would but turn about and mend, it would be a thousand times pleasanter to me to write their histories; for it is no comfort to tell of any body's faults. If the world would but grow good, I should be glad enough to publish it; but till it really becomes so, I must go on describing it as it is; otherwise, I should only mislead my readers, instead of instructing them. It is the duty of a faithful historian to relate the evil with the good.

As to Giles and his boys, I am sure old widow Brown has good reason to remember their dexterity. Poor woman! she had a fine little bed of onions, in her neat and well-kept garden; she was very fond of her onions, and many a rheumatism has she caught by kneeling down to weed them in a damp day, notwithstanding the little flannel cloak and the bit of an old mat which madam Wilson gave her, because the old woman would needs weed in wet weather. Her onions she always carefully treasured up for her winter's store; for an onion makes a little broth very relishing,

lishing, and is indeed the only savoury thing poor people are used to get. She had also a small orchard, containing about a dozen apple-trees, with which in a good year she has been known to make a couple of barrels of cyder, which she sold to her landlord towards paying her rent, besides having a little keg which she was able to keep back for her own drinking. Well! would you believe it, Giles and his boys marked both onions and apples for their own; indeed, a man who stole so many rabbits from the warren, was likely enough to steal onions for sauce. One day, when the widow was abroad on a little business, Giles and his boys made a clear riddance of the onion bed; and when they had pulled up every single onion, they then turned a couple of pigs into the garden, who, allured by the smell, tore up the bed in such a manner, that the widow, when she came home, had not the least doubt but the pigs had been the thieves. To confirm this opinion, they took care to leave the little hatch half open at one end of the garden, and to break down a slight fence at the other end.

I wonder how any body can find in his heart not to pity and respect poor old widows! There is something so forlorn and helpless in their condition, that methinks it is a call on every body, men, women, and children, to do them all the kind services that fall in their way. Surely their having no one to take their part, is an additional reason for kind-hearted people not to hurt and oppress them. But it was this very reason which led Giles to do this woman an injury. With what a touching simplicity is it recorded in scripture, of the youth whom our Blessed Saviour raised from the dead, that he was the only son of his mother, *and she a widow!*

It happened unluckily for poor widow Brown that her cottage stood quite alone. On several mornings together (for roguery gets up much earlier than industry)

dustry) Giles and his boys stole regularly into her orchard, followed by their jack-asses. She was so deaf that she could not hear the asses if they had brayed ever so loud, and to this Giles trusted; for he was very cautious in his rogueries; since he could not otherwise have contrived so long to keep out of prison; for though he was almost always suspected, he had seldom been taken up, and never convicted. The boys used to fill their bags, load their asses, and then march off; and if in their way to the town where the apples were to be sold, they chanced to pass by one of their neighbours who might be likely to suspect them, they then all at once began to scream out, "Buy my coal!—buy my sand!"

Besides the trees in her orchard, poor widow Brown had in her small garden one apple-tree particularly fine; it was a red-streak, so tempting and so lovely, that Giles's family had watched it with longing eyes, till at last they resolved on a plan for carrying off all this fine fruit in their bags. But it was a nice point to manage. The tree stood directly under her chamber-window, so that there was some danger that she might spy them at the work. They therefore determined to wait till the next Sunday morning, when they knew she would not fail to be at church. Sunday came, and during service Giles attended. It was a lone house, as I said before, and the rest of the parish were safe at church. In a trice the tree was cleared, the bags were filled, the asses were whipped, the thieves were off, the coast was clear, and all was safe and quiet by the time the sermon was over.

Unluckily, however, it happened, that this tree was so beautiful, and the fruit so fine, that the people, as they used to pass to and from the church, were very apt to stop and admire widow Brown's redstreaks; and some of the farmers rather envied her that in that scarce

scarce season, when they hardly expected to make a pye out of a large orchard, she was likely to make a cask of cyder from a single tree. I am afraid, indeed, if I must speak out, she herself rather set her heart too much upon this fruit, and had felt as much pride in her tree as gratitude to a good Providence for it; but this failing of hers was no excuse for Giles. The covetousness of this thief had for once got the better of his caution; the tree was too completely stripped, though the youngest boy Dick did beg hard that his father would leave the poor old woman enough for a few dumplings; and when Giles ordered Dick in his turn to shake the tree, the boy did it so gently that hardly any apples fell, for which he got a good stroke of the stick with which the old man was beating down the apples.

The neighbours on their return from church stopped as usual, but it was—not, alas! to admire the apples, for apples there were none left, but to lament the robbery, and console the widow; meantime the red-streaks were safely lodged in Giles's hovel under a few bundles of new hay which he had contrived to pull from the farmers mow the night before, for the use of his jack asses. Such a stir, however, began to be made about the widow's apple-tree, that Giles, who knew how much his character laid him open to suspicion, as soon as he saw the people safe in church again in the afternoon, ordered his boys to carry each a hatful of the apples and thrust them in at a little casement window which happened to be open in the house of Samuel Price, a very honest carpenter in that parish, who was at church with his whole family. Giles's plan, by this contrivance, was to lay the theft on Price's sons in case the thing should come to be further inquired into. Here Dick put in a word, and begged and prayed his father not to force them to carry the apples to Price's. But all that he got by his begging

begging was such a knock as had nearly laid him on the earth. "What, you cowardly rascal," said Giles, "you will go and '*peach*' I suppose, and get "your father sent to gaol."

Poor widow Brown, though her trouble had made her still weaker than she was, went to church again in the afternoon; indeed she rightly thought that her being in trouble was a new reason why she ought to go. During the service she tried with all her might not to think of her redstreaks, and whenever they would come into her head, she took up her prayer book directly, and so she forgot them a little, and indeed she found herself much easier when she came out of the church than when she went in; an effect so commonly produced by prayer, that methinks it is a pity people do not try it oftener. Now it happened oddly enough, that on that Sunday, of all the Sundays in the year, the widow should call in to rest a little at Samuel Price's, to tell over again the lamentable story of the apples, and to consult with him how the thief might be brought to justice. But, O reader! guess if you can, for I am sure I cannot tell you, what was her surprise, when, on going into Samuel Price's kitchen, she saw her own redstreaks lying in the window! The apples were of a sort too remarkable, for colour, shape, and size, to be mistaken. There was not such another tree in the parish. Widow Brown immediately screamed out, "Alas-a-"day! as sure as can be here are my redstreaks; I "could swear to them in any court." Samuel Price, who believed his sons to be an honest as himself, was shocked and troubled at the sight. He knew he had no redstreaks of his own; he knew there were no apples in the window when he went to church; he did verily believe these apples to be the widow's. But how they came there he could not possibly guess.—He called for Tom, the only one of his sons who now

lived

lived at home. Tom was at the Sunday school, which he had never once missed since Mr. Wilson the minister had set up one in the parish. Was such a boy likely to do such a deed?

A crowd was by this time got about Price's door, among which were Giles and his boys, who had already taken care to spread the news that Tom Price was the thief. Most people were unwilling to believe it. His character was very good, but appearances were strongly against him. Mr. Wilson, who had staid to christen a child, now came in. He was much concerned that Tom Price, the best boy in his school, should stand accused of such a crime. He sent for the boy, examined and cross-examined him. No marks of guilt appeared. But still though he pleaded *not guilty*, there lay the redstreaks in his father's window. All the idle fellows in the place, who were most likely to have committed such a theft themselves were the very people who fell with vengeance on poor Tom. The wicked seldom give any quarter. "This is one of your sanctified ones!" cried they. "This was all the good that Sunday schools did! "For their parts they never saw any good come by "religion. Sunday was the only day for a little pas- "time, and if poor boys must be shut up with their "godly books, when they ought to be out taking a "little pleasure, it was no wonder they made themselves amends by such tricks." Another said, he should like to see parson Wilson's righteous one well whipped. A third hoped he would be clapped in the stocks for a young hypocrite as he was; while old Giles, who thought the only way to avoid suspicion was by being more violent than the rest, declared, "that he hoped the young dog would be transport- "ed for life."

Mr. Wilson was too wise and too just to proceed against Tom without full proof. He declared the crime

crime was a very heavy one, and he feared that heavy must be the punishment. Tom, who knew his own innocence, earnestly prayed to God that it might be made to appear as clear as the noon-day; and very fervent were his secret devotions on that night.

Black Giles passed his night in a very different manner. He set off as soon as it was dark, with his sons and their jack-asses laden with their stolen goods. As such a cry was raised about the apples, he did not think it safe to keep them longer at home, but resolved to go and sell them at the next town; borrowing without leave a lame colt out of the moor to assist in carrying off his booty.

Giles and his eldest sons had rare sport all the way in thinking, that while they were enjoying the profit of their plunder, Tom Price would be whipped round the market-place at least, if not sent beyond sea. But the younger boy Dick, who had naturally a tender heart, though hardened by his long familiarity with sin, could not help crying when he thought that Tom Price might, perhaps, be transported for a crime which he himself had helped to commit. He had had no compunction about the robbery, for he had not been instructed in the great principles of truth and justice; nor would he, therefore, perhaps, have had much remorse about accusing an innocent boy. But, though utterly devoid of principle, he had some remains of natural feeling and of gratitude. Tom Price had often given him a bit of his own bread and cheese; and once, when Dick was like to be drowned, Tom had jumped into the pond with his clothes on, and saved his life when he was just sinking; the remembrance of all this made his heart heavy. He said nothing; but, as he trotted barefoot after the asses, he heard his father and brothers laugh at having outwitted the godly ones; and he grieved to think how poor Tom would suffer for his wickedness, yet

fear

fear kept him silent; they called him sulky dog, and lashed the asses till they bled.

In the mean time Tom Price kept up his spirits as well as he could. He worked hard all day, and prayed heartily night and morning. It is true, said he to himself, I am not guilty of this sin; but let this accusation set me on examining myself, and truly repenting of all my other sins; for I find enough to repent of, though I thank God I did not steal the widow's apples.

At length Sunday came, and Tom went to school as usual. As soon as he walked in, there was a great deal of whispering and laughing among the worst of the boys; and he overheard them say, "Who would "have thought it? This is master's favourite! This "is parson Wilson's sober Tommy! We sha'nt have "Tommy thrown in our teeth again if we go to get "a bird's nest, or gather a few nuts on a Sunday." "Your demure ones are always hypocrites," says another. "The still sow sucks all the milk," says a third.

Giles's family had always kept clear of the school. Dick, indeed, had sometimes wished to go; not that he had much sense of sin, or desire after goodness, but he thought if he could once read, he might rise in the world, and not be forced to drive asses all his life. Through this whole Saturday night he could not sleep. He longed to know what would be done to Tom. He began to wish to go to school, but he had not courage; sin is very cowardly. So on the Sunday morning he went and sat himself down under the church wall. Mr. Wilson passed by. It was not his way to reject the most wicked, till he had tried every means to bring them over; and even then he pitied and prayed for them. He had, indeed, long left off talking to Giles's sons; but, seeing Dick sitting by himself, he once more spoke to him, desired

him to leave off his vagabond life, and go with him into the school. The boy hung down his head, but made no answer. He did not, however, either rise up and run away, or look sulky, as he used to do. The minister desired him once more to go. "Sir," said the boy, "I can't go; I am so big I am asham-" ed."—"The bigger you are, the less time you "have to lose."—"But, sir, I can't read."—"Then "it is high time you should learn."—"I should be "ashamed to begin to learn my letters."—"The "shame is not in beginning to learn them, but in be-" ing contented never to know them."—"But, sir, "I am so ragged!"—"God looks at the heart and "not at the coat."—"But, sir, I have no shoes and "stockings."—"So much the worse. I remember "who gave you both. (Here Dick coloured.) It is "bad to want shoes and stockings, but still if you "can drive your asses a dozen miles without them, "you may certainly walk a hundred yards to school "without them."—"But, sir, the good boys will "hate me, and won't speak to me."—"Good boys "hate nobody: and as to not speaking to you, to be "sure they will not keep you company while you go "on in your present evil courses; but as soon as "they see you wish to reform, they will help you, "and pity you, and teach you; and so come along." Here Mr. Wilson took this dirty boy by the hand, and gently pulled him forward, kindly talking to him all the way, in the most condescending manner.

How the whole school stared to see Dick Giles come in! No one, however, dared to say what he thought. The business went on, and Dick slunk into a corner, partly to hide his rags, and partly to hide his sin; for last Sunday's transaction sat heavy on his heart, not because he had stolen the apples, but because Tom Price had been accused. This, I say, made him slink behind. Poor boy! he little thought there

there was ONE saw him who sees all things, and from whose eye no hole nor corner can hide the sinner; "for he is about our bed, and about our paths, and "spieth out all our ways."

It was the custom in that school, and an excellent custom it is, for the master, who was a good and wise man, to mark down in his pocket-book all the events of the week, that he might turn them to some account in his Sunday evening instructions; such as any useful story in the newspaper, any account of boys being drowned as they were out in a pleasure-boat on Sundays, any sudden death in the parish, or any other remarkable visitation of Providence; insomuch, that many young people in the place, who did not belong to the school, and many parents also, used to drop in for an hour on a Sunday evening, when they were sure to hear something profitable. The minister greatly approved this practice, and often called in himself, which was a great support to the master, and encouragement to the people who attended.

The master had taken a deep concern in the story of widow Brown's apple-tree. He could not believe Tom Price was guilty, nor dared he pronounce him innocent; but he resolved to turn the instructions of the present evening to this subject. He began thus: "My dear boys, however light some of you may "make of robbing an orchard, yet I have often told "you there is no such thing as a *little* sin, if it be "wilful or habitual. I wish now to explain to you, "also, that there is hardly such a thing as a *single* "solitary sin. You know I teach you not merely to "repeat the commandments as an exercise for your "memory, but as a rule for your conduct. If you "were to come here only to learn to read and spell "on a Sunday, I should think that was not employ-"ing God's day for God's work; but I teach you to "read that you may, by this means, come so to un-

"derstand the Bible and the Catechism, as to make "every text in the one, and every question and an- "swer in the other, to be so fixed in your hearts, "that they may bring forth in you the fruits of good "living."

Master. How many commandments are there?

Boy. Ten.

Master. How many commandments did that boy break who stole widow Brown's apples?

Boy. Only one, master; the eighth.

Master. What is the eighth?

Boy. *Thou shalt not steal.*

Master. And you are very sure that this was the only one he broke? Now suppose I could prove to you that he probably broke not less than six out of those ten commandments, which the great Lord of heaven himself stooped down from his eternal glory to deliver to men, would you not, then, think it a terrible thing to steal, whether apples or guineas?

Boy. Yes, master.

Master. I will put the case. Some wicked boy has robbed widow Brown's orchard. (Here the eyes of every one were turned on poor Tom Price, except those of Dick Giles, who fixed his on the ground.) I accuse no one, continued the master, Tom Price is a good boy, and was not missing at the time of the robbery; these are two reasons why I presume that he is innocent; but whoever it was, you allow that by stealing these apples he broke the *eighth* commandment?

Boy. Yes, master.

Master. On what day were these apples stolen?

Boy. On Sunday.

Master. What is the fourth commandment?

Boy. Thou shalt keep holy the sabbath-day.

Master. Does that person keep holy the sabbath-day who loiters in an orchard on Sunday, when he should

should be at church, and steal apples when he ought to be saying his prayers?

Boy. No, master.

Master. What command does he break?

Boy. The fourth.

Master. Suppose this boy had parents who had sent him to church, and that he had disobeyed them by not going, would that be keeping the fifth commandment?

Boy. No, master; for the fifth commandment says, *Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother.*

This was the only part of the case in which poor Dick Giles's heart did not smite him; he knew he had disobeyed no father; for his father, alas! was still wickeder than himself, and had brought him up to commit the sin. But what a wretched comfort was this! The master went on.

Master. Suppose this boy earnestly coveted this fruit, though it belonged to another person, would that be right?

Boy. No, Master; for the tenth commandment says, *Thou shalt not covet.*

Master. Very well. Here are four of God's positive commands already broken. Now do you think thieves ever scruple to use wicked words?

Boy. I am afraid not, master.

Here Dick Giles was not so hardened but that he remembered how many curses had passed between him and his father while they were filling the bags, and he was afraid to look up. The master went on.

I will now go one step further. If the thief, to all his other sins, has added that of accusing the innocent to save himself, if he should break the *ninth* commandment, by *bearing false witness against a harmless neighbour*, then six commandments are broken for an *apple!* But if it be otherwise, if Tom Price should

should be found guilty, it is not his good character shall save him. I shall shed tears over him, but punish him I must, and that severely. "No, that you "shan't," roared out Dick Giles, who sprung from his hiding place, fell on his knees and burst out a-crying, "Tom Price is as good a boy as ever lived; "it was father and I who stole the apples!"

It would have done your heart good to have seen the joy of the master, the modest blushes of Tom Price, and the satisfaction of every honest boy in the school. All shook hands with Tom, and even Dick got some portion of pity. I wish I had room to give my readers the moving exhortation which the master gave. But while Mr. Wilson left the guilty boy to the management of the master, he thought it became him, as a minister and a magistrate, to go to the extent of the law in punishing the father. Early on the Monday morning he sent to apprehend Giles.—In the meantime Mr. Wilson was sent for to a gardener's house two miles distant, to attend a man who was dying. This was a duty to which all others gave way in his mind. He set out directly; but what was his surprise, on his arrival, to see, on a little bed on the floor, poaching Giles lying in all the agonies of death! Jack Weston, the same poor young man against whom Giles had informed for killing a hare, was kneeling by him, offering him some broth, and talking to him in the kindest manner. Mr. Wilson begged to know the meaning of all this; and Jack Weston spoke as follows:

"At four this morning, as I was going out to mow, "passing under the high wall of this garden, I heard "a most dismal moaning. The nearer I came the "more dismal it grew. At last, who should I see "but poor Giles groaning, and struggling under a "quantity of bricks and stones, but not able to stir. "The day before he had marked a fine large net on this

"this old wall, and resolved to steal it, for he thought "it might do as well to catch partridges as to pre-"serve cherries; so, sir, standing on the very top of "this wall, and tugging with all his might to loosen "the net from the hooks which fastened it, down "came Giles, net, wall, and all; for the wall was "gone to decay. It was very high indeed, and "poor Giles not only broke his thigh, but has got a "terrible blow on his head, and is bruised all over "like a mummy. On seeing me, sir, poor Giles "cried out, 'Oh, Jack! I did try to ruin thee by "lodging that information, and now thou wilt be "revenged by letting me lie here and perish.' 'God "forbid, Giles! cried I; thou shalt see what sort of "revenge a Christian takes.' So, sir, I sent off the "gardener's boy to fetch a surgeon, while I scam-"pered home and brought on my back this bit of a "hammock, which is indeed my own bed, and put "Giles upon it; we then lifted him up, bed and all, "as tenderly as if he had been a gentleman, and "brought him in here. My wife has just brought "him a drop of nice broth; and now, sir, as I have "done what I could for his poor perishing body, it "was I who took the liberty to send to you to come "to try to help his poor soul, for the doctor says he "can't live."

Mr. Wilson could not help saying to himself, Such an action as this is worth a whole volume of comments on that precept of our blessed Master, *Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.* Giles's dying groans confirmed the sad account Weston had just given. The poor wretch could neither pray himself nor attend to the minister. He could only cry out, "Oh! sir, what will become of me? I don't know "how to repent. O my poor wicked children! Sir, "I have bred them all up in sin and ignorance. "Have mercy on them, sir; let me not meet them in

" in the place of torment to which I am going. Lord " grant them that time for repentance which I have " thrown away!" He languished a few days, and died in great misery:—a fresh and sad instance that people who abuse the grace of God and resist his spirit, find it difficult to repent when they will.

Except the minister and Jack Weston, no one came to see poor Giles, besides Tommy Price, who had been so sadly wronged by him. Tom often brought him his own rice-milk or apple-dumpling; and Giles, ignorant and depraved as he was, often cried out, " That he thought now there must be some truth in " religion, since it taught even a boy to *deny him-* " *self*, and to *forgive an injury*." Mr. Wilson, the next Sunday, made a moving discourse on the danger of what are called *petty offences*. This, together with the awful death of Giles, produced such an effect, that no poacher has been able to shew his head in that parish ever since.

TAWNY RACHEL;

OR

THE FORTUNE TELLER:

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

DREAMS, OMENS, AND CONJURERS.

TAWNEY RACHEL was the wife of poaching Giles. There seemed to be a conspiracy in Giles's whole family to maintain themselves by tricks and pilfering. Regular labour and honest industry did not suit their idle habits. They had a sort of genius at finding out every unlawful means to support a vagabond life.—Rachel travelled the country with a basket on her arm. She pretended to get her bread by selling laces, cabbage nets, ballads, and history books, and used to buy old rags and rabbit skins. Many honest people trade in these things, and I am sure I do not mean to say a word against honest people, let them trade in what they will. But Rachel only made this traffic a pretence for getting admittance into farmers' kitchens, in order to tell fortunes.

She

She was continually practising on the credulity of silly girls; and took advantage of their ignorance to cheat and deceive them. Many an innocent servant has she caused to be suspected of a robbery, while she herself, perhaps, was in league with the thief. Many a harmless maid has she brought to ruin by first contriving plots and events herself, and then pretending to foretel them. She had not, to be sure, the power of really foretelling things, because she had no power of seeing into futurity: but she had the art sometimes to bring them about according as she had foretold them. So she got that credit for her wisdom which really belonged to her wickedness.

Rachel was also a famous interpreter of dreams, and could distinguish exactly between the fate of any two persons who happened to have a mole on the right or the left cheek. She had a cunning way of getting herself off when any of her prophecies failed. When she explained a dream according to the natural appearance of things, and it did not come to pass; then she would get out of that scrape by saying, that this sort of dreams went by contraries. Now of two very opposite things the chance always is that one of them may turn out to be true; so in either case she kept up the cheat.

Rachel, in one of her rambles, stopped at the house of Farmer Jenkins. She contrived to call when she knew the master of the house was from home, which indeed was her usual way. She knocked at the door; the maids being in the field hay-making, Mrs. Jenkins went to open it herself. Rachel asked her if she would please to let her light her pipe? This was a common pretence, when she could find no other way of getting into a house. While she was filling her pipe, she looked at Mrs. Jenkins, and said, she could tell her some good fortune. The farmer's wife, who was a very inoffensive, but a weak and superstitious woman,

woman, was curious to know what she meant. Rachel then looked about very carefully, and shutting the door with a mysterious air, asked her if she was sure nobody would hear them. This appearance of mystery was at once delightful and terrifying to Mrs. Jenkins, who, with trembling agitation, bid the cunning woman speak out. "Then," said Rachel in a solemn whisper, "there is to my certain knowledge "a pot of money hid under one of the stones in your "cellar."—"Indeed!" said Mrs. Jenkins, "it is "impossible, for now I think of it, I dreamt last "night I was in prison for debt."—"Did you real-"ly?" said Rachel; "that is quite surprising. Did "you dream this before twelve o'clock or after?"—"O it was this morning, just before I awoke."—"Then I am sure it is true, for morning dreams al-"ways go by contraries," cried Rachel. "How "lucky it was you dreamt it so late."—Mrs. Jenkins could hardly contain her joy, and asked how the money was to be come at. "There is but one way," said Rachel; "I must go into the cellar. I know by "my art under which stone it lies, but I must not "tell." Then they both went down into the cellar, but Rachel refused to point at the stone unless Mrs. Jenkins would put five pieces of gold into a bason and do as she directed. The simple woman, instead of turning her out of doors for a cheat, did as she was bid. She put the guineas into a bason which she gave into Rachel's hand. Rachel strewed some white powder over the gold, muttered some barbarous words, and pretended to perform the black art. She then told Mrs. Jenkins to put the bason quietly down within the cellar; telling her that if she offered to look into it, or even to speak a word, the charm would be broken. She also directed her to lock the cellar door, and on no pretence to open it in less than forty-eight hours. If," added she, "you closely fol-

"low

" low these directions, then, by the power of my " art, you will find the bason conveyed to the very " stone under which the money lies hid, and a fine " treasure it will be!" Mrs. Jenkins, who firmly believed every word the woman said, did exactly as she was told, and Rachel took her leave with a handsome reward.

When farmer Jenkins came home he desired his wife to draw him a cup of cyder; this she put off doing so long that he began to be displeased. At last she begged he would be so good to drink a little beer instead. He insisted on knowing the reason, and when at last he grew angry, she told him all that had passed; and owned that as the pot of gold happened to be in the cyder cellar, she did not dare open the door, as she was sure it would break the charm. " And it would be a pity you know," said she, " to " lose a good fortune for the sake of a draught of " cyder." The farmer, who was not so easily imposed upon, suspected a trick. He demanded the key, and went and opened the cellar door; there he found the bason, and in it five round pieces of tin covered with powder. Mrs. Jenkins burst out a-crying; but the farmer thought of nothing but of getting a warrant to apprehend the cunning woman. Indeed she well proved her claim to that name, when she insisted that the cellar door might be kept locked till she had time to get out of the reach of all pursuit.

Poor Sally Evans! I am sure she rued the day that ever she listened to a fortune-teller! Sally was as harmless a girl as ever churned a pound of butter; but Sally was credulous, ignorant, and superstitious. She delighted in dream-books, and had consulted all the cunning women in the country to tell her whether the two moles on her cheek denoted that she was to have two husbands, or only two children. If she picked up an old horse-shoe going to church, she was sure

sure that would be a lucky week. She never made a black-pudding without borrowing one of the parson's old wigs to hang in the chimney, firmly believing there were no other means to preserve them from bursting. She would never go to bed on Midsummer eve without sticking up in her room the well-known plant called Midsummer-men, as the bending of the leaves to the right or to the left, would not fail to tell her whether Jacob, of whom we shall speak presently, was true or false. She would rather go five miles about than pass near a church-yard at night. Every seventh year she would not eat beans because they grew downward in the pod, instead of upward; and, though a very neat girl, she would rather have gone with her gown open than have taken a pin from an old woman, for fear of being bewitched. Poor Sally had so many unlucky days in her calendar, that a large portion of her time became of little use, because on these days she did not dare set about any new work. And she would have refused the best offer in the country if made to her on a Friday, which she thought so unlucky a day that she often said what a pity it was that there were any Friday in the week. Sally had twenty pounds left her by her grandmother. She had long been courted by Jacob, a sober lad, with whom she lived fellow-servant at a creditable farmer's. Honest Jacob, like his namesake of old, thought it little to wait seven years to get this damsel to wife, because of the love he bore her, for Sally had promised to marry him when he could match her twenty pounds with another of his own.

Now there was one Robert, a rambling, idle young gardener, who, instead of sitting down steadily in one place, used to roam about the country, and do odd jobs where he could get them. No one understood any thing about him, except that he was a down-looking fellow, who came nobody knew whence, and

and got his bread nobody knew how, and never had a penny in his pocket. Robert, who was now in the neighbourhood, happened to hear of Sally Evans and her twenty pounds. He immediately conceived a longing desire for the latter. So he went to his old friend Rachel the fortune-teller, told her all he had heard of Sally, and promised if she could bring about a marriage between them, she should go shares in the money.

Rachel undertook the business. She set off to the farm-house, and fell to singing one of her most enticing songs just under the dairy window. Sally was so struck with the pretty tune which was unhappily used, as is too often the case, to set off some very loose words, that she jumped up, dropped the skimming dish into the cream, and ran out to buy the song. While she stooped down to rummage the basket for those songs which had the most tragical pictures, (for Sally had a tender heart, and delighted in whatever was mournful,) Rachel looked stedfastly in her face, and told her she knew by her art that she was born to good fortune, but advised her not to throw herself away. "These two moles on your cheek," added she, "shew you are in some danger."—"Do "they denote husbands or children?" cried Sally, starting up, and letting fall the song of the children in the wood.—"Husbands," muttered Rachel.—"Alas! poor Jacob!" said Sally, mournfully, "then "he will die first, won't he?"—"Mum for that," quoth the fortune-teller, "I will say no more." Sally was impatient, but the more curiosity she discovered, the more mystery Rachel affected. At last she said, "if you will cross my hand with a piece of "silver, I will tell your fortune. By the power of "my art I can do this three ways; first by cards, "next by the lines of your hand, or by turning a "cup of tea-grounds; which will you have?"—"O, all!

" O, all! all!" cried Sally, looking up with reverence to this sun-burnt oracle of wisdom, who was possessed of no less than three different ways of diving into the secrets of futurity. Alas! persons of better sense than Sally have been so taken in; the more is the pity! The poor girl said, she would run up stairs to her little box where she kept her money tied up in a bit of an old glove, and would bring down a bright queen Ann's sixpence very crooked. " I am sure," added she, " it is a lucky one, for it cured me of a " very bad ague last spring, by only laying it nine " nights under my pillow without speaking a word. " But then you must know what gave the virtue to " this sixpence was, that it had belonged to three " young men of the name of John; I am sure I had " work enough to get it. But true it is, it certain- " ly cured me. It must be the sixpence you know, " for I am sure I did nothing else for my ague, ex- " cept indeed taking some bitter stuff every three " hours which the doctor called bark. To be sure I " lost my ague soon after I took it, but I am certain " it was owing to the crooked sixpence and not to " the bark. And so, good woman, you may come " in if you will, for there is not a soul in the house " but me." This was the very thing Rachel wanted to know, and very glad she was to learn it.

While Sally was above stairs untying her glove, Rachel slipped into the parlour, took a small silver cup from the beaufet, and clapped it into her pocket. Sally ran down lamenting that she had lost her sixpence, which she verily believed was owing to her having put it into a left glove, instead of a right one. Rachel comforted her by saying, that if she gave her two plain ones instead, the charm would work just as well. Simple Sally thought herself happy to be let off so easily, never calculating that a smooth shilling was worth two crooked sixpences. But this skill

was

was a part of the black art in which Rachel excelled. She took the money and began to examine the lines of Sally's left hand. She bit her withered lip, shook her head, and bade her poor dupe beware of a young man, who had black hair. "No indeed," cried Sally all in a fright, "you mean black eyes, for our "Jacob has got brown hair, 'tis his eyes that are "black."—"That is the very thing I was going to "say," muttered Rachel, "I meant eyes though I "said hair, "for I know his hair is as brown as a "chesnut, and his eyes as black as a sloe."—"So "they are sure enough," cried Sally, "how in the "world could you know that?" forgetting that she herself had just told her so. And it is thus that these hags pick out of the credulous all which they afterwards pretend to reveal to them. "O, I know a "pretty deal more than that," said Rachel, but you "must be aware of this man."—"Why so," cried Sally with great quickness: "Because," answered Rachel, "you are fated to marry a man worth a hun-"dred of him, who has blue eyes, light hair, and a "stoop in the shoulders."—"No, indeed, but I "can't," said Sally; "I have promised Jacob, and "Jacob I will marry."—"You cannot, child," returned Rachel in a solemn tone; "it is out of your "power, you are *fated* to marry the grey eyes and "light hair."—"Nay, indeed," said Sally, sighing deeply, "if I am fated, I must; "I know there's "no resisting one's fate." This is a common cant with poor deluded girls, who are not aware that they themselves make their fate by their folly, and then complain there is no resisting it.—"What can I do?" said Sally. "I will tell you that too,' said Rachel. "You must take a walk next Sunday afternoon to "the church-yard, and the first man you meet in a "blue coat, with a large posy of pinks and southern-"wood in his bosom, sitting on the church-yard wall,

"about

" about seven o'clock, he will be the man."—" Pro-
" vided," said Sally, much disturbed, that he has
" grey eyes, and stoops."—" O, to be sure," said
Rachel, " otherwise it is not the right man."—" But
" if I should mistake," said Sally, " for two men
" may happen to have a coat and eyes of the same
" colour?"—" To prevent that," replied Rachel,
" if it is the right man, the two first letters of his
" name will be R. P. This man has got money be-
" yond sea."—" O, I do not value his money," said
Sally, with tears in her eyes, " for I love Jacob bet-
" ter than house or land; but if I am fated to marry
" another, I can't help it; you know there is no
" struggling against my fate."

Poor Sally thought of nothing, and dreamt of nothing all the week but the blue coat and the grey eyes. She made a hundred blunders at her work. She put her rennet into the butter-pan, and her skimming dish into the cheese-tub. She gave the curd to the hogs, and put the whey into the vats. She put her little knife out of her pocket for fear it should cut love, and would not stay in the kitchen, if there was not an even number of people, lest it should break the charm. She grew cold and mysterious in her behaviour to faithful Jacob, whom she truly loved. But the more she thought of the fortune-teller, the more she was convinced that brown hair and black eyes were not what she was fated to marry, and therefore, though she trembled to think it, Jacob could not be the man.

On Sunday she was too uneasy to go to church; for poor Sally had never been taught that her being uneasy was only a fresh reason why she ought to go thither. She spent the whole afternoon in her little garret, dressing in all her best. First she put on her red ribbon, which she had bought at last Lammas fair: then she recollected that red was an unlucky

colour, and changed it for a blue ribbon, tied in a true lover's knot; but suddenly calling to mind that poor Jacob had bought this knot for her of a pedlar at the door, and that she had promised to wear it for his sake, her heart smote her, and she laid it by, sighing to think she was not fated to marry the man who had given it to her. When she had looked at herself twenty times in the glass, (for one vain action always brings on another) she set off, trembling and shaking every step she went. She walked eagerly towards the church-yard, not daring to look to the right or left, for fear she should spy Jacob, who would have offered to walk with her, and so have spoilt all. As soon as she came within sight of the wall, she spied a man sitting upon it. Her heart beat violently. She looked again; but alas! the stranger not only had on a black coat, but neither hair nor eyes answered the description. She now happened to cast her eyes on the church-clock, and found she was two hours before her time. This was some comfort. She walked away and got rid of the two hours as well as she could, paying great attention as she went not to walk over any straws which lay across, and carefully looking to see if there were never an old horse-shoe in the way, that infallible symptom of good fortune. While the clock was striking seven, she returned to the church-yard, and, O! the wonderful power of fortune-tellers! there she saw him! there sat the very man! his hair as light as flax, his eyes as blue as butter-milk, and his shoulders as round as a tub. Every tittle agreed, to the very nosegay in his waistcoat button-hole. At first indeed she thought it had been sweet brier, and, glad to catch at a straw, whispered to herself, it is not he, and I shall marry Jacob still; but on looking again, she saw it was southernwood plain enough, and that of course all was over. The man accosted her with some

some very nonsensical, but too acceptable, compliments, Sally was naturally a modest girl, and but for Rachel's wicked arts, would not have had courage to talk with a strange man; but how could she resist her fate you know? After a little discourse, she asked him, with a trembling heart, what might be his name? Robert Price at your service, was the answer. "Robert Price! that is R. P. as sure as "I am alive, and the fortune-teller was a witch! "it is all out! it is all out! O the wonderful art "of fortune-tellers!"

The little sleep she had that night was disturbed with dreams of graves, and ghosts, and funerals; but as they were morning dreams, she knew those always went by contraries, and that a funeral denoted a wedding. Still a sigh would now and then heave, to think that in that wedding Jacob could have no part. Such of my readers as know the power which superstition has over the weak and credulous mind, scarcely need be told, that poor Sally's unhappiness was soon completed. She forgot all her vows to Jacob: she at once forsook an honest man whom she loved, and consented to marry a stranger, of whom she knew nothing, from a ridiculous notion that she was compelled to do so by a decree which she had it not in her power to resist. She married this Robert Price, the strange gardener, whom she soon found to be very worthless, and very much in debt. He had no such thing as "money "beyond sea," as the fortune-teller had told her; but alas! he had another wife there. He got immediate possession of Sally's twenty pounds. Rachel put in for her share, but he refused to give her a farthing, and bid her get away or he would have her taken up on the vagrant act. He soon ran away from Sally, leaving her to bewail her own weakness; for it was that indeed. and not any irresistible fate,

which had been the cause of her ruin. To complete her misery, she herself was suspected of having stolen the silver cup which Rachel had pocketed. Her master, however, would not prosecute her, as she was falling into a deep decline, and she died in a few months of a broken heart, a sad warning to all credulous girls.

Rachel, whenever she got near home, used to drop her trade of fortune-telling, and only dealt in the wares of her basket. Mr. Wilson, the clergyman, found her one day dealing out some very wicked ballads to some children. He went up with a view to give her a reprimand; but had no sooner begun his exhortation than up came a constable, followed by several people.—"There she is, that is she, that "is the old witch who tricked my wife out of the "five guineas," said one of them. "Do your "office constable, seize that old hag. She may tell "fortunes and find pots of gold in Taunton gaol, "for there she will have nothing else to do?" This was that very farmer Jenkins, whose wife had been cheated by Rachel of the five guineas. He had taken pains to trace her to her own parish: he did not so much value the loss of the money, as he thought it was a duty he owed the public to clear the country of such vermin. Mr. Wilson immediately committed her. She took her trial at the next assizes, when she was sentenced to a year's imprisonment. In the mean time, the pawnbroker to whom she had sold the silver cup, which she had stolen from poor Sally's master, impeached her; and as the robbery was fully proved upon Rachel, she was sentenced for this crime to Botany Bay; and a happy day it was for the county of Somerset, when such a nuisance was sent out of it. She was transported much about the same time that her husband Giles lost his life, in stealing the net from the garden-

garden-wall, as related in the second part of poaching Giles.

I have thought it my duty to print this little history, as a kind warning to all you young men and maidens not to have any thing to say to *cheats, impostors, cunning women, fortune-tellers, conjurers,* and *interpreters of dreams.* Listen to me, your true friend, when I assure you that God never reveals to weak and wicked women those secret designs of his providence, which no human wisdom is able to foresee. To consult these false oracles is not only foolish, but sinful. It is foolish, because they are themselves as ignorant as those whom they pretend to teach; and it is sinful, because it is prying into that futurity which God, in mercy as well as wisdom, hides from men. God indeed *orders* all things; but when you have a mind to do a foolish thing, do not fancy you are *fated* to do it. This is tempting Providence, and not trusting him. It is indeed *charging God with folly.* Prudence is his gift, and you obey him better when you make use of prudence, under the direction of prayer, than when you madly run into ruin, and think you are only submitting to your fate. Never fancy that you are compelled to undo yourself, or to rush upon your own destruction, in compliance with any supposed fatality. Never believe that God conceals his will from a sober Christian who obeys his laws, and reveals it to a vagabond gypsey who runs up and down breaking the laws both of God and man. King Saul never consulted the witch till he had left off serving God. The Bible will direct us what to do better than any conjurer, and there are no days unlucky but those which we make so by our own vanity, sin and folly.

THOUGHTS

ON

THE IMPORTANCE

OF THE

MANNERS OF THE GREAT

TO

GENERAL SOCIETY.

"*You are the Makers of Manners.*"

SHAKESPEARE.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

MANNERS OF THE GREAT.

To a large and honourable class of the community, to persons considerable in reputation, important by their condition in life, and commendable for the decency of their general conduct, these slight hints are respectfully addressed. They are not intended as a satire upon vice, or a ridicule upon folly, being written neither for the foolish nor the vicious. The subject is too serious for ridicule; and those to whom it is addressed are too respectable for satire. It is recommended to the consideration of those who, filling the higher ranks in life, are naturally regarded as patterns, by which the manners of the rest of the world are to be fashioned.

The mass of mankind, in most places, and especially in those conditions of life which exempt them from the temptation to shameful vices, is perhaps chiefly

chiefly composed of what is commonly termed by the courtesy of the world *good kind of people*; for persons of very flagitious wickedness are almost as rare as those of very eminent piety. To the latter of these, admonition were impertinent; to the former it were superfluous. These remarks, therefore, are principally written with a view to those persons of rank and fortune who live within the restraints of moral obligation, and acknowledge the truth of the Christian religion; and who, if in certain instances they allow themselves in practices not compatible with a strict profession of Christianity, seem to do it rather from habit and want of reflection, than either from disbelief of its doctrines, or contempt of its precepts.

Inconsideration, Fashion, and the World, are three confederates against Virtue, with whom even good kind of people often contrive to live on excellent terms: and the fair reputation which may be obtained by a complaisant conformity to the prevailing practice, and by mere decorum of manners, without a strict attention to religious principle, is a constant source of danger to the rich and great. There is something almost irresistibly seducing in the contagion of general example: hence the necessity of that vigilance, which it is the business of Christianity to quicken by incessant admonition, and which it is the business of the world, to lay asleep by the perpetual opiates of ease and pleasure.

A fair reputation is among the laudable objects of human ambition; yet this really valuable blessing is sometimes converted into a snare, by inducing a treacherous security as soon as it is obtained; and by leading him who is too anxious about obtaining it, to stop short without aiming at a higher motive of action. A fatal indolence is apt to creep in upon the soul when it has once acquired the good opinion of mankind, if

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the acquisition of that good opinion was the ultimate end of its endeavours. Pursuit is at an end when the object is in possession; for he is not likely to "press forward" who thinks he has already "attained." The love of worldly reputation, and the desire of God's favour, have this specific difference, that in the latter, the possession always augments the desire; and the spiritual mind accounts nothing done while any thing remains undone.

But after all, a fair fame, the support of numbers, and the flattering concurrence of human opinion, is obviously a deceitful dependance; for as every individual must die for himself, and answer for himself, both these imaginary resources will fail, just at the moment when they could have been of any use. A good reputation, even without internal piety, would be worth obtaining, if the tribunal of heaven were fashioned after the manner of human courts of judicature. If at the general judgment we were to be tried by a jury of our fellow mortals, it would be but common prudence to secure their favour at any price. But it can stand us in little stead in the great day of decision, it being the consummation of infinite goodness not to abandon us to the mercy of each other's sentence; but to reserve us for *his* final judgment who knows every motive of every action; who will make strict inquisition into singleness of heart, and uprightness of intention: in whose eyes the sincere prayer of powerless benevolence will outweigh the most splendid profession, or the most dazzling action.

We cannot but rejoice in every degree of human virtue which operates favourably on society, whatever be the motive, or whoever be the actor; and we should gladly commend every degree of goodness, though it be not exactly squared by our own rules and notions. Even the good actions of such persons as are too much actuated by a regard to appearances, are

are not without their beneficial effects. The righteousness of those who occupy this middle region of morality among us, certainly exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; for they are not only exact in ceremonials, but in many respects fulfil the weightier matters of law and conscience. Like Herod, they often "hear gladly," and "do many "things." Yet I am afraid I shall be thought severe in remarking that, in general, those characters in the New Testament, of whose future condition no very comfortable hope is given, seem to have been taken, not from the profligate, the abandoned, and the dishonourable; but from that decent class commonly described by the term of *good sort of people*; that mixed kind of character in which virtue appears, if it do not predominate. The young Ruler was certainly one of the first of this order; and yet we are left in dark uncertainty as to his final allotment. The rich man who built him barns and storehouses, and only proposed to himself the full enjoyment of that fortune, which we do not hear was unfairly acquired, might have been, for all that appears to the contrary, a *very good sort of man*; at least, if we may judge of him by multitudes who live precisely for the same purposes, and yet enjoy a good degree of credit, and who are rather considered as objects of respect, than of censure. His plan, like theirs, was "to take his ease, to "eat, drink, and be merry."

But the most alarming instance is that of the splendid epicure, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. He committed no enormities that have been transmitted to us; for that he dined well and dressed well, could hardly incur the bitter penalty of eternal misery. That his expences were suitable to his station, and his splendour proportioned to his opulence, does not exhibit any objection to his character. Nor are we told that

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he refused the crumbs which Lazarus solicited. And yet this man, on an authority which we are not permitted to question, is represented, in a future state, as *lifting up his eyes being in torments.* His punishment seems to have been the consequence of an irreligious, a worldly spirit, a heart corrupted by the softnesses and delights of life. It was not because he was rich, but because he trusted in riches; or, if even he was charitable, his charity wanted that principle which alone could sanctify it. His views terminated here; this world's good, and this world's applause, were the motives and the end of his actions. He forgot God; he was destitute of piety; and the absence of this great and first principle of human actions rendered his shining deeds, however they might be admired among men, of no value in the sight of God.

There is no error more common, or more dangerous, than the notion that an unrestrained indulgence of pleasure, and an unbounded gratification of the appetites is generally attended with a liberal, humane, and merciful temper. Nor is there any opinion more false and more fatal, or which demands to be more steadily controverted, than that libertinism and good-nature are natural and necessary associates. For after all that corrupt poets, and more corrupt philosophers, have told us of the blandishments of pleasure, and of its tendency to soften the temper and humanize the affections, it is certain, that nothing hardens the heart like excessive and unbounded luxury; and he who refuses the fewest gratifications to his own voluptuousness, will generally be found the least susceptible of tenderness for the wants of others. In one reign the cruelties at Rome bore an exact proportion to the dissoluteness at Capreæ. And in another it is not less notorious, that the Imperial fiddler became more barbarous, as he grew more profligate. Prosperity, says the Arabian proverb, fills the heart till it makes

makes it hard; and the most dangerous pits and snares for human virtue are those, which are so covered over with the flowers of prosperous fortune, that it requires a cautious foot, and a viligant eye, to escape them.

Ananias and Saphira were, perhaps, well esteemed in society; for it was enough to establish a very considerable reputation to sell even part of their possessions for religious purposes: but what an alarm does it sound to hypocrisy, that, instead of being rewarded for what they brought, they were punished for what they kept back! And it is to be feared, that this deceitful pair are not the only one, upon whom a good action, without a pure intention, has drawn down a righteous retribution.

Outward actions are the surest, and indeed, to human eyes the only evidences of sincerity, but Christianity is a religion of *motives* and *principles*. The Gospel is continually referring to the *heart*, as the source of good; it is to the poor in *spirit*, to the pure in *heart*, that the divine blessing is annexed. A man may correct many improper practices, and refrain from many immoral actions, from merely human motives; but, though this partial amendment is not without its uses, yet this is only attacking symptoms, and neglecting the mortal disease. But to subdue a worldly temper, to control irregular desires, and to have "a clean heart," is to attack sin in its strong holds. Totally to *accomplish* this, is, perhaps, beyond the narrow limits of human perfection, the best men being constantly humbled to find, that when they "would do good evil is present with them;" but to *attempt* it, with an humble reliance on superior aid, is so far from being an extravagant or romantic flight of virtue, that it is but the common duty of every ordinary Christian. And this perfection is not the less real, because it is a point which seems constantly to recede from our approaches, just as the sensible

sensible horizon recedes from our natural eye. Our highest attainments, instead of bringing us, "to the "mark," only teach us that the mark is at a greater distance, by giving us more humbling views of ourselves, and more exalted conceptions of the state after which we are labouring. Though the progress towards perfection may be perpetual in this world, the actual attainment is reserved for a better. And this restless desire of a happiness which we cannot reach, and this lively idea of a perfection which we cannot attain, are among the many arguments for a future state, which seem to come little short of demonstration. The humble christian takes refuge under the deep sense of his disappointments and defects, in this consoling hope, "When I awake up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied."

Let me not here be misunderstood as undervaluing the virtues which even worldly men may possess. I am charmed with humanity, generosity, and integrity, in whomsoever they may be found. But one virtue must not intrench upon another. Charity must not supplant faith. If a man be generous, good-natured, and humane, it is impossible not to feel for him the tenderness of a brother; but if, at the same time, he be irreligious, intemperate, or profane, who shall dare to say he is in a safe state? Good humour, and generous sentiments will always make a man a pleasant acquaintance, but who shall lower the doctrines of the Gospel, to accommodate them to the conduct of men? Who shall bend a strait rule, to favour a crooked practice? Who shall controvert that authority which has said, that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord?*

May I venture to be a little paradoxical; and while so many grave persons are descanting on the mischiefs of vice, may I be permitted to say a word on the mischiefs of virtue, or, rather, of that shining

ing counterfeit, which, while it wants the specific gravity, has much of the brightness of sterling worth? Never, perhaps, did any age produce more beautiful declamations in praise of virtue than the present; never were more polished periods rounded in honour of humanity. An antient Pagan would imagine that Astrea had returned to take up her abode in our metropolis; a primitive Christian would conclude, that "righteousness and peace had there met together." But how would they be surprised to find that the obligation to these duties was not always thought binding, not only on the reader but on their eloquent encomiasts themselves. How would they be surprised to find that universal benevolence may subsist with partial injustice, and boundless liberality with sordid selfishness! that a man may seem eager in redressing the injuries of half the globe, without descending to the petty detail of private virtues; and burn with zeal for the good of millions he never saw, while he is spreading vice and ruin through the little circle of his own personal influence!

When the general texture of an irregular life is spangled over with some constitutional pleasing qualities; when gaiety, good humour, and a thoughtless profusion of expence, throw a lustre round the faultiest characters, it is no wonder that common observers are blinded into admiration; a profuse generosity dazzles *them* more than all the duties of the decalogue. But though it may be a very good electioneering virtue, yet there are many qualities which may obtain popularity among men, which do not tend to secure the favour of God. It is somewhat strange that the extravagance of the great should be the criterion of their goodness with those very people who are themselves the victims to this idol; for the prodigal pays no debts if he can help it: and it is a notorious instance of the danger of these popular virtues, and of the

the false judgments of men, that in one of the wittiest and most popular comedies* which this country has ever produced, those very passages which exalt liberality and turn justice into ridicule, were nightly applauded with enthusiastic rapture by those deluded tradesmen, whom, perhaps, that very sentiment helped to keep out of their money.

There is another sort of fashionable character, whose false brightness is still more pernicious, by casting a splendour over the most destructive vices. Corrupt manners, ruinous extravagance, and the most fatal passion for play, are sometimes gilded over with many engaging acts of charity, and a general attention and respect to the ceremonials of Religion. But this is degrading the venerable image and superscription of Christianity, by stamping them on a baser metal than they were ever intended to impress. The young and gay shelter themselves under such examples, and scruple the less to adopt the bad parts of such mixed characters, when they see that a loose and negligent, not to say immortal conduct, is so compatible with a religious profession.

But I degress from my intention; for it is not the purpose of this address to take notice of any actions which the common consent of mankind has determined to be wrong: but of such chiefly as are practised by the sober, the decent, and the regular; and to drop a few hints on such less obvious offences as are, in general,

Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne.

Nor will the bounds which I have prescribed myself allow of my wandering into a wide and general field of observation.

* The School for Scandal.

The idea of the present slight performance was suggested by reading the King's late excellent proclamation against irreligion and immorality *. Under the shelter of so high a sanction, it may not be unseasonable to press on the hearts of the better disposed, such observances as seem to be generally overlooked, and to remark such offences as commonly elude censure, because they are not commonly thought censurable.

It is obvious to all pious persons, that that branch of the divine law, against which the better kind of people trespass with the least scruple, is the fourth commandment. Many who would shudder at the violation of the other nine, seem without ceremony to expunge this from the divine code; but by what authority they do this, has never been explained. The christian legislator does not seem to have abridged the commandments; and there is no subsequent authority so much as pretended to by Protestants.

It is not here intended to take notice of such flagrant offences as lie open to the cognizance of higher tribunals; or to pollute this paper with descanting on the holders of card assemblies on Sundays; the frequenters of taverns and gaming houses; the printers of Sunday newspapers; the proprietors of Sunday stage coaches; and others who openly insult the laws of the land; laws which will always be held sacred by good subjects, even were not the law of God antecedent to them.

Many of the order whom I here address are persons of the tenderest humanity, and not only wish well to the interests of virtue, but are favourably

* This tract was written soon after the institution of the society for enforcing the King's proclamation against vice and irreligion.

disposed

disposed to advance the cause of religion; nay would be extremely startled at not being thought sincerely religious: yet from inconsideration, want of time, want of self-examination, want of a just sense of the high requirements of the Divine law, want of suspecting the deceitfulness of the human heart, sometimes allow themselves in inattentions and negligence which materially affect their own safety, and the comfort of others.—While an animated spirit of charity seems to be kindled among us: while there is a general disposition to instruct the ignorant, and to reform the vicious; we cannot help regretting that these amiable exertions should be counteracted, in some degree, by practices of a directly opposite tendency; trifling in their appearance, but serious in their effects.

There are still among us petty domestic evils, which seem too inconsiderable to claim redress. There is an aggrieved body of men in our very capital, whose spiritual hardships seem scarcely to have been taken into consideration, I mean the HAIR DRESSERS, on whom

> The Sunday shines, no day of rest to them.

Is there not a peculiar degree of unkindness in exercising such cruelty on the souls of men, whose whole lives are employed in embellishing our persons? And is it quite conceivable how a lady's conscience is able to make such nice distinctions, that she would be shocked at the idea of sending for her mantua-maker * or milliner, her carpenter or mason, on a Sunday, while she makes no scruple regularly to employ a hair dresser?

* It is feared that since these pages were written the scruple of sending for either is much diminished.

Is it not almost ridiculous to observe the zeal we have for doing good at a distance, while we neglect the little, obvious, every day, domestic duties, which should seem to solicit our immediate attention; But an action ever so right and praise-worthy which is only to be periodically performed, at distant intervals, is less burthensome to corrupt nature, than an undeviating attention to such small, constant, right habits as are hostile to our natural indolence, and would be perpetually vexing and disturbing our self-love. The weak heart indulges its infirmity, by allowing itself intermediate omissions, and habitual neglects of duty; reposing itself for safety, on regular but remote returns of stated performances. It is less trouble to subscribe to the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, than to have daily prayers in our own families; and I am persuaded that there are multitudes of well-meaning people who would gladly contribute to a mission of Christianity to Japan or Otaheite, to whom it never occurred that the hair-dresser, whom they are every Sunday detaining from church, has a soul to be saved; that the law of the land co-operates with the law of God, to forbid their employing him; and that they have no right, either legal or moral, to this portion of his time. The poor man himself, perhaps, dares not remonstrate, for fear he should be deprived of his employment for the rest of the week. If there were no other objection to a pleasurable Sunday among the great and affluent, methinks this single one might operate: would not a devout heart be unwilling to rob a fellow-creature of his time for devotion, or a humane one of his hour of rest? "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, "therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law."

It is strange that there should be so little consistency in human conduct, that the same persons should

should gladly contribute to spread the light of Christianity in another hemisphere; while, by their example, they actually obstruct the progress of it at home. But it is, I doubt not, much oftener owing to the imperceptible influence of custom and habit, than to a decided ill intention. Besides, it may be in morals as it is in optics, the eye and the object may come too close to each other, to answer the end of vision. There are certain faults which press too near our self-love to be even perceptible to us.

The petty mischief of what is called *card money*, is so assimilated to our habits, and interwoven with our family arrangements, that even many of the prudent and the virtuous no longer consider it as a worm which is feeding on the vitals of domestic virtue. How many poor youths, after having been trained in a wholesome dread of idleness and gaming, when they are sent abroad into the world, are astonished to find that part of the wages of the servant is to be paid by his furnishing the implements of diversion for the guests of the master. Thus good servants are a commodity which has long been diminishing by an elaborate system. The more sober the family, the fewer attractions it must necessarily have; for these servants will naturally quit a place, however excellent, where there is no play, for one where there is some; and a family where there is but little, for one where there is much. Thus if the advantage of the dependent is to increase in a direct ratio to the dissipation of his employer, what encouragement is left for valuable servants, or what prospect remains of securing valuable servants for sober-minded families?

It will be said, that so small an evil is scarcely worth insisting on. But a small fault, which is become a part of a system, in time establishes an error

ror into a principle. And that demonstranee which should induce people to abolish one wrong habit, or pluck out one rooted error, however trifling, would be of more real use than the most eloquent declamation against vice in general. To take out only one thorn from a suffering patient is more beneficial to him than the most elaborate disquisition on the pain he is suffering from the thorns which remain.

It should be held as an eternal truth, that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. It would be arguing great ignorance of human nature, and exacting a very rigorous degree of virtue from a person of vulgar sentiments to expect that he should wish well to the interests of sobriety, or heartily desire the decrease of dissipation, while the growth of it is made so profitable to himself. It is requiring too much to make the temptation so forcible where the power of resistance is so weak. To hold out to a poor fellow the strong seduction of interest, and yet to expect he will retain the same inflexible principle, is to expect from an illiterate servant an elevation of virtue, which has not always been found even in statesmen and ministers.

It is not here intended to enter into any animadversion on the subject of play itself. But may we not ask, without offence, if it be perfectly right to introduce any money arising from or connected with it, into a part of regular family œconomy? Is it not giving an air of system to diversion, which does not seem entirely of a piece with the other orderly practices of many discreet families where this odd traffic is carried on? Would not our ancestors, who seem to have understood œconomy and magnificence too, at least as well as their descendants, have been scandalized had it been proposed to them to incorporate play so intimately with the texture of their domestic arrangements, as that it should make part of their plan?

plan? And would they have thought it a very dignified practice not to have paid themselves for the amusements of their own houses; but to have invited their friends to an entertainment of which the guests were to defray part of the expence?

Let me suppose a case: what appearance would it have, if every gentleman who has partaken of the social entertainment of a friend's table, were, after dinner, expected by the butler, to leave a piece of money under his plate to pay for his wine? Do not common sense, hospitality, friendship, and liberal feelings revolt at the bare suggestion of such a project? Yet there is in effect as little hospitality, as little friendship, and as little liberality in being obliged to pay for the cards as for the wine; both equally making a part of the entertainment.

It is hardly too ludicrous to add, that seeing how this point has been carried in favour of the groom of the chambers (and it descends down to the lowest footman), we need not despair of seeing the butler insist on being allowed to furnish the wine, for which he shall compel the guests to pay with the same high interest with which they now pay for the cards. It will seem odd at first, but afterwards we shall think no more about it, to see him, during dinner, noting down those who drink the more costly wines, that they may be taxed double. And it will sound whimsical *at first*, to hear the butler give his master notice that he must quit his place, because the company have drank little wine. This only sounds ridiculous, while the leaving a place thro' deficiency of card money sounds reasonable, because we are accustomed to the one, and the other is not yet become fashionable.

The extinction of this favorite perquisite would at first be considered as a violent innovation. All reformations seem formidable before they are attempted.

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The custom of *vails*, "which gave corruption *broader* wings to fly," was supposed to be invincible. Yet how soon did a general concurrence exterminate it! Had any one foretold twenty years ago, that in a very short space near half a million of pilfering, swearing, sabbath breaking children, should be rescued from the streets, and brought into habits of sobriety and virtue, should we not have laughed to scorn the spiritual Hercules, who would have undertaken that the cleansing stream of religious instruction should thus be poured through the Augean stable of ignorance and vice, and in some measure wash away its grossest impurities?

The servant would probably complain of the annihilation of this gainful custom: but the master would find his account in indemnifying the loss; for he in his turn would be released from the preposterous contribution to the wages of other men's servants. If in a family of overgrown dissipation the stated addition should not be found equivalent to the relinquished perquisite, the servant must heroically submit to the disadvantageous commutation for the public good. And after all it would be no very serious grievance if his reduced income should not then exceed that of the Chaplain. It will still at least exceed that of many a deserving gentleman, bred to liberal learning, whose feelings that learning has refined to a painful accuteness, and who is withering away in hopeless penury with a large family, on a Curacy, but little surpassing the wages of a livery servant.

The same principle in human nature by which the nabob, the contractor, and others, by a sudden influx of unaccustomed wealth, become voluptuous, extravagant, and insolent, seldom fails to produce the same effect on persons in these humbler stations, when raised from inferior places to the sudden affluence of these gainful ones Increased profligacy on a sud-

a sudden swell of fortune is commonly followed by desperate methods to improve the circumstances when impaired by the improvidence attending unaccustomed prosperity.

There is another domestic practice which it is almost idle to mention, because it is so difficult to redress, since such is the present state of society that even the conscientious think themselves obliged to concur in it. That ingenuity which could devise some effectual substitute for the daily and hourly lie of *Not at home*, would deserve well of society. Why will not some of those illustrious ladies who lead in the fashionable world invent some phrase which shall equally rescue from destruction the time of the master and the veracity of the servant? Some new and appropriate expression, the not adopting which should be blended with the stigma of vulgarity, might accomplish that which the charge of its being immoral has failed to accomplish.

The expediency of the denial itself, no one will dispute, who has a just idea of the value of time. Some scrupulous persons so very much dispute the lawfulness of making their servants' tongue the medium of any kind of falsehood, as to make it a point of conscience rather to lay themselves open to the irruption of every idle invader, who sallies out on morning visits bent on the destruction of business and the annihilation of study. People of very strict integrity lament that this practice induces a general spirit of lying, mixes itself with the habit, and by a quality, the reverse of an alterative, gradually undermines the moral constitution. Others on the contrary assert, that this is one of those lies of convention, no more intended to deceive, than the *dear sir* at the beginning, or your *humble servant* at the close of a letter to a person who is not dear to you, and to whom you owe no subjection. There is, however, this very material

material difference, that if the first be a falsehood, you do not convey it by proxy: You use it yourself, and you use it to one who sets no more value on your words than you intended he should; and who shews you he does not, by using the same stated phrase in return, in addressing you, for whom he cares as little. Here the words pass for no more than they are worth.

The ill effects of the custom we are lamenting may be traced in marking the gradual initiation of an unpractised country servant. And who has not felt for his virtuous distress, when he has been ordered to call back a more favoured visitant, whom he had just sent away with the assurance that his lady was not at home? Who has not seen his suppressed indignation at being obliged to become himself the detecter of that falsehood of which he had been before the instrument? But a little practice, and a repetition of reproof for even daring to *look* honest, soon cures this fault, especially as he is sure to be commended, in proportion to the increased firmness of his voice, and the steadiness of his countinence.

If this evil, petty as it may seem to be, be really without a remedy; if the state of society be such that it cannot be redressed, let us not be so unreasonable as to expect that a servant will equivocate in small instances and not in great ones. To hope that he will always lie for your convenience, and never for his own, is perhaps expecting more from human nature in a low and uncultivated state than we have any right to expect. Nor should the master look for undeviating and perfect rectitude from his servant in whom the principle of veracity is daily and hourly weakened in conformity to his own command.

Let us bring home the case to ourselves, the only fair way of determining in all cases of conscience. Suppose that we had established it into a system to allow

allow ourselves regularly to lie on one certain, given subject, every day, and every hour in the day; while we continued to value ourselves on the most undeviating adherence to truth on every other point. Who shall say, that at the end of one year's tolerated and systematic lying, on this individual subject, we should continue to look upon falsehood in general with the same abhorrence we did when we first entered upon this partial exercise of it.

There is an evil newly crept into polished society, and it comes under a mask so specious, that they who are allured by it, come not seldom under the description of *Good sort of people.* I allude to SUNDAY-CONCERTS. Many who would be startled at a profane, or even a light amusement, allow themselves to fancy that the name of *sacred music* sanctifies the diversion. But if those more favoured beings, whom Providence enables to live in ease and affluence, do not make these petty renunciations of their own ways, and their own pleasure, what criterion have we by which to judge of their sincerity? For as the goodness of Providence has exempted them from painful occupations, they have neither labour from which to rest, nor business from which to refrain. A little abstinence from pleasure is the only valid evidence they have to give of their obedience to the divine precept.

I know with what indignant scorn this remark will by many, be received: I know that much will be advanced in favour of the sanctity of this amusement. I shall be told that the words are, many of them, extracted from the Bible, and that the composition is the divine Handel's. But were the angel Gabriel the poet, the archangel Michael the composer, and the song of the Lamb the subject, it would not abrogate that statute of the Most High, which has said,

said, "Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day, and "thy SERVANT, and thy CATTLE, shall do no "manner of work."—I am persuaded that the hallelujahs of heaven would make no moral music to the ear of a conscientious person, while he reflected that multitudes of servants are through his means waiting in the street, exposed to every temptation; engaged, perhaps, in profane swearing, and idle, if not dissolute conversation; and the very cattle are deprived of that rest which the tender mercy of God was graciously pleased, by an astonishing condescension, to include in the commandment.

But I will, for the sake of argument, so far concede as to allow of the innocence and even piety of Sunday concerts: I will suppose (what, however, does not often happen) that no unhallowed strains are ever introduced; I will admit that some attend these concerts with a view to cultivate devout affections; that they cherish the serious impressions excited by the music, and retire in such a frame of spirit as convinces them that the heart was touched while the ear was gratified: nay, I *would* grant, if such a concession would be accepted, that the intervals were filled up with conversation, "whereby "one may edify another:"—yet all these good effects, allowing them really to have been produced, will not remove the invincible objection of an EVIL EXAMPLE; and what liberal spirit would refuse any reasonable sacrifice of its own pleasure to so important a motive? Your servants have been accustomed to consider a concert as a secular diversion; if you, therefore, continue it on a Sunday, will not they also expect to be indulged on that day with their common amusements? Saint Paul, who was a very liberal thinker, believed it prudent to make frequent sacrifices of things indifferent in themselves. He was willing to deny himself a harmless and lawful gratification,

gratification, *even as long as the world stood*, rather than shock the tender consciences of men of less understanding. Where a practice is neither good nor evil in itself, it is both discreet and generous to avoid it, if it can be attended with any possible danger to minds less enlightened, and to faith less confirmed.

But religion apart, I have sometimes wondered that people do not yield to the temptation that is held out to them, of abstaining from diversions one day in seven, upon motives of mere human policy; as voluptuaries sometimes fast, to give a keener relish to the delights of the next repast; for pleasure, like an over-fed lamp, is extinguished by the excess of its own aliment: not to say that the instrument of our gratifieation is often converted into our bane. Anacreon was choked by a grape stone. The lovers of pleasure are not always prudent, even upon their own principles; for I am persuaded that this world would afford much more real satisfaction than it does, if we did not press, and torture, and strain it, on order to make it yield what it does not contain: Much good, and much pleasure, it does liberally bestow; but no labour, or art, can extract from it that elixir of peace, that divine essence of content, which it is not in its nature to produce. There is good sense in searching into every blessing for its *hidden* proprieties; but it is folly to ransack and plunder it for such properties as the experience of all ages tells us are *foreign* to it. We exhaust the world of its pleasures, and then lament that it is empty; we wring those pleasures to the very dregs, and then complain that they are vapid. We erroneously seek in the world for that peace which we are repeatedly told is not to be found in it. While we neglect to seek it in *Him* who has expressly told us that *our* happiness depends on *his* having "over-

"come

" come the world."—" Peace I leave with you, my " peace I give unto you; not as *the world giveth* " *give I unto you.*"

I shall, probably, be accused of a very narrow and fanatical spirit, in animadverting on a practice so little suspected of harm as the frequenting of public walks and gardens on a Sunday; and, certainly, there cannot be an amusement more entirely harmless in itself. But I must appeal to the honest testimoney of our own hearts, if the *effect* be favourable to seriousness. Do we commonly retire from these places with the impressions which were made on us at church in their full force? We entered these sprightly scenes, perhaps, with a strong remaining tincture of that devout spirit which the public worship had infused into the mind: but have we not felt it gradually diminish? Have not our powers of resistance grown insensibly weaker? Has not the gaiety of the scene converted, as it were, argument into illusion? The doctrines, when in the morning appeared the sober dictates of reason, now seem unreasonably rigid; and truths, which were then thought incontrovertible, now appear impertinent. To answer objections is much easier than to withstand allurements. The understanding may controvert a startling proposition with less difficulty than the sliding heart can resist the infection of seducing gaiety. To oppose a cold and speculative faith to the enchantment of present pleasure, is to fight with inadequate weapons: it is resisting arms with rules; it is combating a temptation with an idea. Whereas, he who engages in the Christian warfare, will find that his chief strength consists in knowing that he is very weak; his progress will depend on his conviction that he is every hour liable to go back; his success, on the persuasion of his fallibility; his safety, on the assurance that to retreat from danger is his highest

highest glory, and to decline the combat his truest courage.

Whatever indisposes the mind for the duty of any particular season, though it assume ever so innocent a form, cannot be perfectly right. If the heart be aid open to the incursion of vain imaginations, and worldly thoughts, it matters little by what gate the enemy entered. If the effect be injurious, the cause cannot be quite harmless. It is the prefidious property of certain pleasures, that, though they seem not to have the smallest harm in themselves, they imperceptibly indispose the mind to every thing that is good.

Many readers will be apt to produce against all this preciseness, that hackneyed remark which one is tired of hearing, that Sunday diversions are allowed publicly in many foreign countries, as well in those professing the reformed religion, as popery. But the corruptions of one part of the Protestant world are no reasonable justification of the evil practices of another. Error and infirmity can never be proper objects of imitation. It is still a remnant of the old leaven: and as to pleading the practice of Roman Catholic countries, one blushes to hear an enlightened Protestant justifying himself by examples drawn from that benighted religion, whose sanctions we should in any other instance be ashamed to plead.

Besides, though I am far from vindicating the amusements permitted on Sundays in foreign countries, by allowing that established custom and long prescription have the privilege of conferring right; yet foreigners may, at least, plead the sanction of custom, and the connivance of the law: while in this country, the law of the land and established usage, concurring with still higher motives, give a sort of venerable sanction to religious observances, the breach of which will be always more liable to misconstruction

struction than in countries where so many motives do not concur in its support.

I do not assert that all those who neglect a strict observation of the Lord's day are remiss in the performance of all their other duties; though they should bear in mind that the observance of their other duties is no atonement for the neglect of this; I will however venture to affirm, that all whom I have remarked conscientiously to observe this day from right motives, have been uniformly attentive to their general conduct. It has been the opinion of many wise and good men,* that Christianity will stand, or fall, as this day is neglected, or observed. Sunday seems to be a kind of Christian Palladium; and the city of God will never be totally taken by the enemy till the observance of that be quite lost. Every sincere soldier of the great Captain of our Salvation must, therefore, exert himself in its defence, as ever he would preserve the divine Fort of Revelation against the confederated attacks of the world and the Devil.

I shall proceed to enumerate a few of the many causes which seem to impede well-disposed people in the progress of religion. None perhaps contributes more to it than that cold, prudential caution against the folly of aiming at *perfection*, so frequent in the mouths of the worldly wise. "We must take the

* The testimony of one lawyer will, perhaps, be less suspected than that of many priests. "I have ever found," says the great Lord Chief Justice Hale, "by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance "of the duty of Sunday has ever had joined to it a blessing upon the rest "of my time; and the week that has been so begun has been blest and "prosperous to me: and, on the other side, when I have been negligent "of the duties of this day, the rest of the week has been unsuccessful and "unhappy to my own secular employments. So that I could easily make "an estimate of my successes the week following, by the manner of my "passing this day. AND I DO NOT WRITE THIS LIGHTLY, BUT "BY LONG AND SOUND EXPERIENCE."

Sir Matthew Hale's Works.

"world,"

" world," say they, " as we find it; reformation is " not our business, and we are commanded not to be " righteous overmuch." A text by the way intirely misunderstood and preverted by people of this sort. But these admonitions are contrary to every maxim in human affairs. In arts and letters* the most consummate models are held out to imitation. We never hear any body cautioned against becoming too wise, too learned, or too rich. Activity in business is accounted commendable; in friendship it is amiable; in ambition it is laudable. The highest exertions of industry are commended; the finest energies of genius are admired. In all the perishing concerns of earthly things, zeal is extolled as exhibiting marks of a sprightly temper and a vigorous mind. Strange! that to be " fervent in spirit," should only be dishonourable in that single instance which should seem to demand unremitting diligence, and unextinguishable warmth.

But after all, is an excessive and intemperate zeal the *common* vice of the times? Is there any *very* imminent danger that the enthusiasm of the great should transport them to dangerous and inconvenient excesses? Are our young men of fashion so *very* much led away by the fervours of piety, that they require to have their imaginations tamed, and their ardours cooled by the freezing maxims of worldly wisdom? Is the spirit of the age so *very* much inclined to catch and communicate the fire of devotion, as to require to be damped by admonition, or extinguished by ridicule? When the inimitable Cervantes attacked the

* When Pliny the younger was accused of despising the degenerate eloquence of his own age, and of the vanity of aspiring at perfection in oratory, and of endeavouring to become the rival of Cicero; instead of denying the charge, he exclaimed with a noble spirit, " I think it the height of " folly not always to propose to myself the most perfect object of imita- " tion."

wild notions and romantic ideas which misled the age in which he lived, he did wisely, because he combated an actually existing evil; but in this latter end of the eighteenth century, there seems to be little more occasion (among persons of rank, I mean) of cautions against enthusiasm than against chivalry; and he who declaims against religious excesses in the company of well-bred people, shews himself to be as little acquainted with the manners of the times in which he lives, as he would do who should think it a point of duty to write another Don Quixote.

Among the devices dangerous to our moral safety, certain favourite and specious maxims are not the least successful, as they carry with them an imposing air of indulgent candour, and always seem to be on the popular side of good-nature. One of the most obvious of these is, that method of reconciling the conscience to practices not decidedly wicked, and yet not scrupulously right, by the qualifying phrase, *that there is no harm in it.* I am mistaken if more innocent persons do not inflame their spiritual reckoning by this treacherous apology than by almost any other means. Few are systematically, or premeditatedly wicked; or propose to themselves, at first, more than such small indulgences as they are persuaded *have no harm in them.* But this latitude is gradually and imperceptibly enlarged. As the expression is vague and indeterminate; as the darkest shade of virtue, and the lightest shade of vice, melt into no very incongruous colouring; as the bounds between good and evil are not always so precisely defined but that he who ventures to the confines of the one, will find himself on the borders of the other; every one furnishes his own definition; every one extends the supposed limits a little farther; till the bounds which fence in permitted from unlawful pleasures are gradually broken down, and the marks which seperated em imperceptibly destroyed.

It is, perhaps, one of the most alarming symptoms of the degeneracy of morals in the present day, that the distinctions of right and wrong are almost swept away in polite conversation. The most grave offences are often named with cool indifference; the most shameful profligacy with affected tenderness and indulgent toleration. The substitution of the word *gallantry* for that crime which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all the modern abuses of language. Atrocious deeds should never be called by gentle names. This must certainly contribute, more than any thing, to diminish the horror of vice in the rising generation. That our passions should be too often engaged on the side of error, we may look for the cause; though not for the vindication, in the unresisted propensities of our constitution: but that our *reason* should ever be exerted in its favour, that our *conversation* should ever be taught to palliate it, that our *judgment* should ever look on it with indifference, that our tongues should ever be employed to confound the eternal distinctions of right and wrong; this has no shadow of excuse: because this can pretend to no foundation in nature, no apology in temptation, no palliative in passion.

However defective, therefore, our practice may be; however we may be allured by seduction, or precipitated by passion, let us beware of lowering the STANDARD of RIGHT. This induces an imperceptible corruption into the heart, stagnates the noblest principle of action, irrecoverably debases the sense of moral and religious obligation, and prevents us from living up to the height of our nature, because it prevents us from knowing its possible elevation. It cuts off all communication with virtue, and almost prevents the possibility of a return to it. If we do not rise as high as we aim, we shall rise the higher for having

aimed at a lofty mark: but where the RULE is low, the practice cannot be high, though the converse of the proposition is not proportionably true.

Nothing more benumbs the exertions of ardent youthful virtue than the cruel sneer which worldly prudence bestows on active goodness, and the cool derision it expresses at the defeat of a benevolent scheme, of which malice, rather than penetration, had foreseen the failure. Alas! there is little need of any such discouragements. The world is a climate which too naturally chills a glowing generosity, and contracts an expanded heart. The zeal of the most sanguine is but too apt to cool, and the activity of the most diligent, to slacken of itself: and the disappointments which Benevolence encounters in the failure of her best-concerted projects, and the frequent depravity of the most chosen objects of her bounty, would soon dry up the amplest streams of charity, were they not fed by the living fountain of religious principle.

I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without animadverting on the too prompt alacrity, even of worthy people, to disseminate, in public and general conversation, instances of their unsuccessful attempts to do good. I never hear a charity story begun to be related in mixed company, that I do not tremble for the catastrophe, lest it should exhibit some mortifying disappointment, which may deter the inexperienced from running any generous hazards, and excite harsh suspicions, at an age, when it is less dishonourable to meet with a few casual hurts, and transient injuries, than to go cased in the cumbersome and impenetrable armour of distrust. The liberal should be particularly cautious how they furnish the avaricious with creditable pretences for saving their money, since all the instances of the mortifications the humane meet with are carefully treasured

ed up, and added to the armory of the covetous man's arguments, and never fail to be produced by him as defensive weapons, upon every fresh attack on his heart or his purse.

But I am willing to hope, that that uncharitableness which we so often meet with in persons of advanced years, is not always the effect of a heart naturally hard. Misanthropy is very often nothing but abused sensibility. Long habits of the world, and a melancholy conviction how little good he has been able to do in it, harden many a tender-hearted person.—The milk of human kindness becomes soured by repeated acts of ingratitude. This commonly induces an indifference to the well-being of others, from a hopelessness of adding to the stock of human virtue and human happiness. This uncomfortable disease is very fond of spreading its own contagion, which is a cruelty to the health of young and uninfected virtue.—For this distemper, generated by a too sanguine disposition, and grown chronical from repeated disappointments, from having rated worldly virtue and worldly generosity too highly, there is but one remedy, or rather one prevention: and this is a genuine principle of piety. He who is once convinced that he is to assist his fellow-creatures, because it is the will of God; he who is persuaded that his forgiving his fellow-servant the hundred pence is a condition annexed to the remission of his own ten thousand talents, will soon get above all uneasiness when the consequence does not answer his expectation. He will soon become only anxious to do his duty, humbly committing events to higher hands. Disappointments will then only serve to refine his motives, and purify his virtue. His charity will then become a sacrifice with which God is well pleased! His affections will be more spiritualized, and his devotions more intense. Nothing short of such a courageous

piety,

piety, growing on the stock of Christian principle can preserve a heart hackneyed in the world from relaxed diligence, or criminal despair.

People in general are not aware of the mischief of judging of the rightness of any action by its prosperity, or of the excellence of any institution by the abuse of it. We must never proportion our exertions to our success, but to our duty. If every laudable undertaking were to be dropped because it failed in some cases, or was abused in others, there would not be left an Alms House, a Charity-School, or an Hospital in the land. If every right practice were to be discontinued because it had been found not to be successful in every instance, and if every right principle were rejected because it had not been operative in all cases, this false reasoning pushed to the extreme, might at last be brought as an argument for shutting up our churches, and burning our bibles.

But if, on the one hand, there is a proud and arrogant discretion which ridicules, as Utopian and romantic, every generous project of the active and the liberal; so there is on the other, a sort of popular bounty which arrogates to itself the exclusive name of *feeling*, and rejects with disdain the influence of an higher principle. I am far from intending to depreciate this humane and exquisitely tender sentiment, which the beneficent Author of our nature gave us, as a stimulus to remove the distresses of others, in order to get rid of our own uneasiness. I would only observe, that where not strengthened by superior motives, it is a casual and precarious instrument of good, and ceases to operate, except in the immediate presence, and within the audible cry of misery. This sort of feeling forgets that any calamity exists which is out of its own sight; and though it would empty its purse for such an occasional object as rouses transient sensibility, yet it seldom makes any stated provision

vision for miseries, which are not the less real because they do not obtrude upon the sight, and awaken the tenderness of immediate sympathy. This is a mechanical charity, which requires springs and wheels to set it a going; whereas, real Christian charity does not wait to be acted upon by impressions and impulses.

Another cause which very much intimidates well-disposed people, is their terror, lest the character of piety should derogate from their reputation as men of sense. Every man of the world naturally arrogates to himself the superiority of understanding over every religious man. He, therefore, who has been accustomed to set a high value on his intellectual powers, must have made very considerable advances in piety before he can acquire a magnanimous indifference to this usurped superiority of another; before he can submit to the parsimonious allotment of wit and learning, which is assigned him by the supercilious hand of worldly wisdom. But this attack upon his pride will be no bad touchstone of his sincerity. If his advances have not been so considerable, then, by an hypocrisy of the least common kind, he will be industrious to appear less good than he really is, lest the detection of his serious propensities should draw on him the imputation of ordinary parts or low attainments. But the danger is, that while he is too sedulously intent on maintaining his pretensions as an ingenious man, his claims to piety should daily become weaker. That which is long suppressed is too frequently extinguished.

Nothing, perhaps, more plainly discovers the faint impression which religion has really made upon our hearts, than this disinclination, even of good people, to serious conversation. Let me not be misunderstood; I do not mean the wrangle of debate; I do not mean the gall of controversy; I do not mean the fiery

fiery strife of *opinions*, than which nothing can be less favourable to good nature, good manners, or good society. But it were to be wished, that it was not thought ill-bred and indiscreet that the escapes of the tongue should now and then betray the "abundance "of the heart:" that when such subjects are casually introduced, a discouraging coldness did not instantly take place of that sprightly animation of countenance which made common topics interesting. If these "outward and visible signs" were unequivocal, we should form but moderate ideas of the "inward and spiritual grace." It were to be wished, that such subjects were not thought dull *merely* because they are good; it were to be wished that they had the common chance of fair discussion; and that parts and learning were not ashamed to exert themselves on occasions where both might appear to so much advantage. If the heart were really interested, could the affections forbear now and then to break out into language? Artists, physicians, merchants, lawyers, and scholars, keep up the spirit of their professions by mutual intercourse. New lights are struck out, improvements are suggested, emulation is kindled, love of the object is inflamed, mistakes of the judgment are rectified, and desire of excellence is excited by communication. And is piety alone so very easy of acquisition, so very natural to our corrupt hearts, as to require none of the helps which are indispensible on all other subjects? Travellers, who are to visit any particular country, are full of earnest inquiry, and diligent research; they think nothing indifferent by which their future pleasure or advantage may be affected. Every hint which may procure them any information, or caution them against any danger, is thankfully received; and all this, because they are really in *earnest* in their preparation for this journey; and do fully *believe*, not only that there is such a country;

country, but that they themselves have a personal individual interest in the good, or evil, which may be found in it.

A farther danger to *good kind of people* seems to arise from a mistaken idea, that only great and actual sins are to be guarded against. Whereas, in effect, temptations to the grosser sins do not so frequently occur to those who are hedged in by the blessing of affluence, by a regard to reputation and the care of health; while sins of omission make up, perhaps, the most formidable part of *their* catalogue of offences. These generally supply in number what they want in weight, and are the more dangerous for being little ostensible. They continue to be repeated with less regret, because the remembrance of their predecessors does not, like the remembrance of formal, actual crimes, assume a body and a shape, and terrify by the impression of particular scenes and circumstances. While the memory of transacted evil haunts a tender conscience by perpetual apparition; omitted duty, having no local or personal existence, not being recorded by standing acts and deeds, and dates, and having no distinct image to which the mind may recur, sinks into quiet oblivion, without deeply wounding the conscience, or tormenting the imagination. These omissions were, perhaps, among the "secret "sins," from which the royal penitent so earnestly desired to be cleansed: and it is worthy of the most serious consideration, that these are the offences against which the Gospel pronounces some of its very alarming denunciations. It is not less against negative than against actual evil, that affectionate exhortation, lively remonstrance, and pointed parable, are exhausted. It is against the tree which bore NO fruit, the lamp which had NO oil, the unprofitable servant who made NO use of his talent, that the severe sentence is denounced; as well as against *corrupt*

rupt fruit, *bad* oil, and talents *ill* employed. We are led to believe, from the same high authority, that omitted duties, and neglected opportunities, will furnish no inconsiderable portion of our future condemnation. A very awful part of the decision, in the great day of account, seems to be reserved merely for carelessness, omissions, and negatives. Ye gave me NO meat; ye gave me NO drink; ye took me NOT in; ye visited me NOT. On the punishment attending positive crimes, as being more naturally obvious, it was not, perhaps, thought so necessary to insist.

Another cause, which still further impedes the reception of Religion even among the well-disposed, is, that garment of sadness in which people delight to suppose her dressed; and that life of hard austerity, and pining abstinence, which they pretend she enjoins her disciples. And it were well if this were only the misrepresentation of her declared enemies; but unhappily, it is the too frequent misconception of her injudicious friends. But such an over-charged picture is not more unamiable than it is unlike: for I will venture to affirm, that Religion, with all her beautiful and becoming sanctity, imposes fewer sacrifices, not only of rational, but of pleasurable enjoyment, than the uncontrolled dominion of any one vice. Her service is not only safety hereafter, but freedom here. She is not so tyrannizing as appetite, so exacting as the World, nor so despotic as Fashion. Let us try the case by a parallel, and examine it, not as affecting our virtue but our pleasure. Does Religion forbid the cheerful enjoyments of life as rigorously as Avarice forbids them? Does she require such sacrifices of our ease as Ambition, or such renunciations of our quiet as Pride? Does Devotion *murder sleep* like Dissipation? Does she destroy Health like Intemperance? Does she annihilate Fortune like Gaming? Does she imbitter Life like Discord;

cord; or abridge it like Duelling? Does Religion impose more vigilance than Suspicion? or inflict half as many mortifications as Vanity? Vice has her martyrs: and the most austere and self-denying Ascetic (who mistakes the genius of Christianity almost as much as her enemies mistake it) never tormented himself with such cruel and causeless severity as that with which Envy lacerates her unhappy votaries. Worldly honour obliges us to be at the trouble of resenting injuries; and worldly prudence obliges us to be at the expence of litigating about them; but Religion spares us the inconvenience of the one and the cost of the other, by the summary command to forgive; and by this injunction she consults our happiness no less than our virtue; for the torment of constantly hating any one must be, at least, equal to the sin of it. And resentment is an evil so costly to our peace that we should find it more cheap to forgive even were it not more right. If this estimate be fairly made, then is the balance clearly on the side of Religion even in the article of pleasure.

It is an infirmity not uncommon to *good kind of people*, to comfort themselves that they are living in the exercise of some one natural good quality, and to make a religious merit of a constitutional happiness. They have also a strong propensity to separate what God has joined; belief and practice; the creed and the commandments; actions and motives; moral duty and religious obedience. Whereas, you will hardly find, in all the New Testament, a moral, or a social virtue, that is not hedged in by some religious injunction: scarcely a good action enjoined towards others, but it is connected with some exhortation to personal purity. All the charities of benevolence are, in general, so agreeable to the natural make of the heart, that it is a very tender mercy of God to have made that a duty, which, to finer spirits,

rits, would have been irresistable as an inclination; and to have annexed the highest future reward to the greatest present pleasure. But in order to give a religious sanction to a social virtue, the duty of "visiting the fatherless and widow in their affliction," is inseparably attached to the difficult and self denying injunction of "keeping ourselves unspotted from "the world." This adjunct is the more needful, as many are apt to make a kind of moral commutation, and to allow themselves so much pleasure in exchange for so much charity. But one good quality can never stand proxy for another. The Christian virtues derive their highest lustre from association: they have such a spirit of society, that they are weak and imperfect when solitary; their radiance is brightened by an intermingling of their beams, and their natural strength multiplied by their alliance with each other.

It cannot be denied that *good sort of people* sometimes use religion as the voluptuous use physick. As the latter employ medicine to make health agree with luxury, the former consider religion as a medium to reconcile peace of conscience with a life of pleasure. But no moral chemistry can blend natural contradictions. In all such unnatural mixtures the world will still be uppermost, and religion will disdain to coalesce with its antipathy.

Let me not be suspected of intending to insinuate that religion encourages men to fly from society, and hide themselves in solitudes: to renounce the generous and important duties of active life, for the visionary, cold, and fruitless virtues of an Hermitage, or a Cloyster. No: the mischief arises not from our living in the world, but from the world living in us; occupying our hearts, and monopolizing our affections. Action is the life of virtue, and the world is the theatre of action. Perhaps some of the most

perfect

perfect patterns of human conduct may be found in the most public stations, and among the busiest orders of mankind. It is, indeed, a scene of trial, but the glory of the triumph is proportioned to the peril of the conflict. A sense of danger quickens circumspection, and makes virtue more vigilant. Lot, perhaps is not the only character who maintained his integrity in a great city, proverbially wicked, and forfeited it in the bosom of retirement.

It has been said that worldly *good sort of people* are a greater credit to their profession, by exhibiting more cheerfulness, gaiety, and happiness, than are visible in serious Christians. If this assertion be true, which I very much suspect, is it not probable that the apparent ease and gaiety of the former may be derived from the same source of consolation which Mrs. Quickly recommended to Fallstaff, in Shakespeare's admirable picture of the death-bed scene of that witty profligate? "He wished for comfort, "quoth mine hostess, and began to talk of God; "now I, to comfort him, begged him he should not "think of God: it was time enough to trouble him-"self with these things." Do not many deceive themselves by drawing water from these dry wells of comfort? and patch up a precarious and imperfect happiness in this world, by diverting their attention from the concerns of the next.?

Another obstruction to the growth of piety, is that unhappy prejudice which even good kind of people too often entertain against those who differ from them in opinion. Every man who is sincerely in earnest to advance the interests of religion, will have acquired such a degree of candour, as to become indifferent by whom good is done, or who has the reputation of doing it, provided it be actually done. He will be anxious to increase the stock of human virtue, and of human happiness, by every possible means.

means. He will whet and sharpen every instrument of goodness, though it be not cast in his own mould, or fashioned after his own pattern. He will never consider whether the form suits his own particular taste, but whether the instrument itself be calculated to accomplish the work of his master.

I shall conclude these loose and immethodical hints with a plain tho' short address to those who content themselves with a decent profession of the doctrines, and a formal attendance on the offices, instead of a diligent discharge of the duties of Christianity. Believe, and forgive me!—you are the people who lower religion in the eyes of its enemies. The openly prophane, the avowed enemies to God and goodness, serve to confirm the truths they mean to oppose, to illustrate the doctrines they deny, and to accomplish the very predictions they affect to disbelieve. But you, like an inadequate and faithless prop, overturn the edifice which you pretend to support.—When an acute and keen-eyed infidel measures your lives with the rule by which you profess to walk; he finds so little analogy between them, the copy is so unlike the pattern, that this inconsistency of yours is the pass through which his most dangerous attack is made. And I must confess, that, of all the arguments, which the malignant industry of infidelity has been able to muster, the negligent conduct of professing Christians seems to me to be the only one which is really capable of staggering a man of sense. —He hears of a spiritual and self-denying religion; he reads the beatitudes; he observes that the grand artillery of the Gospel is planted against pride and sensuality. He then turns to the transcript of this perfect original; to the lives which pretend to be fashioned by it. There he sees, with triumphant derision, that pride, self-love, luxury, self-sufficiency, unbounded personal expence, and an inordinate appetite

petite for pleasure, are reputable vices in the eyes of many of those who acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrines. He weighs that meekness to which a blessing is promised, with that arrogance which is too common to be very dishonourable. He compares that non-conformity to the world, which the Bible makes the criterion of a believer, with that rage for amusement which is not considered as disreputable in a Christian. He opposes the self-denying and lowly character of the Author of our faith with the sensual practices of his followers. He finds little resemblance between the restraints prescribed, and the gratifications indulged in. What conclusions must a speculative reasoning sceptic draw from such premises? Is it any wonder that such phrases as "a "broken spirit," a "contrite heart," "poverty of "spirit," "refraining the soul," "keeping it low," and "casting down high imaginations," should be to the unbeliever "foolishness," when such humiliating doctrines are a "stumbling block" to professing Christians; to Christians who cannot cordially relish a religion which professedly tells them it was sent to stain the pride of human glory, and "to exclude "boasting?"

But though the passive and self-denying virtues are not high in the esteem of mere good sort of people, yet they are peculiarly the evangelical virtues. The world extols brilliant actions; the Gospel enjoins good habits and right motives: it seldom inculcates those splendid deeds which make heroes, or teaches those lofty sentiments which constitute philosophers; but it enjoins the harder task of renouncing self, of living uncorrupted in the world, of subduing besetting sins, and of "not thinking of our-"selves more highly than we ought." The *acquisition* of glory was the precept of other religions, the *contempt* of it is the perfection of Christianity.

Let

Let us then be consistent, and we shall never be contemptible, even in the eyes of our enemies. Let not the unbeliever say that we have one set of opinions for our theory, and another for our practice; that to the vulgar

> We shew the rough and thorny way to heav'n,
> While we the primrose path of dalliance tread.

Would it not become the character of a man of sense, of which consistency is a most unequivocal proof, to choose some rule and abide by it? An extempore Christian is a ridiculous character. Fixed principles, if they be really principles of the heart, and not merely opinions of the understanding, will be followed by a consistent course of action; while indecision of spirit will produce instability of conduct. If there be a model which we profess to admire, let us square our lives by it. If either the Koran of Mahomet, or the Revelations of Zoroaster, be a perfect guide, let us follow one of them. If either Epicurus, Zeno, or Confucius, be the peculiar object of our veneration and respect, let us avowedly fashion our conduct by the dictates of their philosophy; and then, though we may be wrong, we shall not be absurd; we may be erroneous, but we shall not be inconsistent; but if the Bible be in truth the word of God, as we profess to believe, we need look no farther for a consummate pattern. "If the Lord be God, let us follow HIM." If Christ be a sacrifice for sin, let Him be also to us the example of an holy life.

But I am willing to flatter myself that the moral and intellectual scene about us begins to brighten. I indulge myself in moments of the most enthusiastic and delightful vision, that things are beginning gradually to lead to the fulfilment of that promise, that "all the kingdoms of the earth shall become the

"kingdoms

" kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." I take encouragement that that glorious prophecy, that " of the increase of his government there shall be no " end," seems to be gradually accomplishing; and in no instance more, perhaps, than in the noble attempt about to be made for the abolition of the African Slave-trade*. For what event can human wisdom foresee more likely to contribute to " give the " SON the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," than the success of such an enterprise, which will restore the lustre of the British name, and cut off at a single stroke as large and disgraceful a portion of national guilt as ever impaired the virtue, or dishonoured the councils of a Christian country.

A good spirit seems to be at work. A catholic temper is diffusing itself among all sects and parties: an enlightened candour, and a liberal toleration, were never more prevalent; good men combat each other's opinions†; they hate each other less for those points in which they disagree, and love each other more for those points in which they join issue than they formerly did. We have many public encouragements; we have a pious king; a wise and virtuous minister; very many respectable, and not a few serious clergy. Their number I am willing to hope is daily increasing. Among these some of the first in dignity are the most exemplary in conduct. An increasing desire to instruct the poor, to inform the ignorant, and to reclaim the vicious, is spreading among us. The late Royal Proclamation affords an honourable sanction to virtuous endeavours, and lends nerves and sinews to the

* This interesting question was then beginning to be agitated in parliament.

† This was written before the French Revolution!!!

otherwise feeble exertions of individuals, by enforcing laws wisely planned, but hitherto feebly executed. In short, there is a good hope that we shall more and more become "that happy people who have the "Lord for their God:" that as prosperity is already within our walls, peace and virtue may abide in our dwellings.

But vain will be all endeavours after *partial* and *subordinate* amendment. Reformation must begin with the GREAT, or it will never be effectual. *Their* example is the fountain whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions, and characters. To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt, is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned.

If, therefore, the Rich and Great will not, from a liberal spirit of doing right, and from a Christian spirit of fearing God, abstain from those offences, for which the poor are to suffer fines and imprisonments, effectual good cannot be done. It will signify little to lay penalties on the horses of the drover, or on the waggon of the husbandman, while the chariot wheels of the Great roll with incessant motion; and while the sacred day on which the sons of industry are commanded by royal proclamation to desist from travelling, is for that very reason selected for the journeys of the Great, and preferred, because the road is encumbered with fewer interruptions. But will it not strike every well-meaning Sunday traveller with a generous remorse, when he reflects that he owes the accommodation of an unobstructed road to the very obedience which is paid by others to that divine and human law which he is in the very act of violating?

Will not the common people think it a little inequitable that they are abridged of the diversions of the

the public-house and the gaming-yard on Sunday evening, when they shall hear that many houses of the first nobility are on that evening crowded with company, and such amusements carried on as are prohibited by human laws even on common days? As imitation, and a desire of being in the fashion, govern the lower orders of mankind, it is to be feared that they will not think reformation reputable, while they see it *recommended* only, and not *practised*, by their superiors. A precept counteracted by an example, is worse than fruitless, it is ridiculous: and the common people will be tempted to set an inferior value on goodness, when they find it is only expected from the lower ranks. They cannot surely but smile at the disinterestedness of their superiors, who while they seem anxiously concerned to save others, are so little solicitous about their own state. The ambitious vulgar will hardly relish a salvation which is only intended for plebeians; nor will they be apt to entertain very exalted notions of that promised future reward, the road to which they perceive their betters are so much more earnest to point out to *them*, than to walk in themselves.

It was not by inflicting pains and penalties that Christianity first made its way into the world: the divine truths it inculcated received irrestible confirmation from the LIVES, PRACTICES, and EXAMPLES of its venerable professors. These were arguments which no popular prejudice could resist, no Jewish logic refute, and no Pagan persecution discredit.—Had the primitive Christians only *praised and promulgated* the most perfect religion the world ever saw, it would have produced but very slender effects on the faith and manners of the people. The astonishing consequences which followed the pure doctrines of the Gospel, would never have been produced if

the jealous and inquisitive eye of malice could have detected that the DOCTRINES the Christians recommended had not been illustrated by the LIVES they led.

POSTSCRIPT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

THE public favour having already brought this little Essay to another Edition, the author has been sedulous to discover any particular objections that have been made to it. Since the preceding sheets were printed off, it has been suggested by some very respectable persons who have honoured this slight performance with their notice, that it inculcates a too rigid austerity, and carries the point of observing Sunday much too far; that it takes away all the usual occupations of the day, without substituting any others in their stead; and that it only pulls down a wrong system, without so much as attempting to build up a right one. To these observations the Author begs leave to reply, that whilst animadverting on error, the insisting on obvious duty was purposely omitted. To tell people what they already know to be right, was less the intention of this address, than to observe upon practices which long

long habit had prevented them from perceiving to be wrong. Sensible and well-meaning persons can hardly be at a loss on a subject which has exhausted precept and wearied exhortation. To have expatiated on it, would only have been to repeat what is already known and acknowledged to be right, even by those whom the hurry of engagements will not allow to take breath one day in a week, that they may run the race of pleasure with more alacrity on the other six. But probably it is not the duties, but the amusements appropriated to the day about which the enquiry is made. It will, perhaps, be found, that the intervals of a Sunday regularly devoted to all its reasonable and obvious employments, are not likely to be so very tedious, but that they might be easily and pleasantly filled up by cheerful, innocent, and instructive conversation. Human delights would be very circumscribed indeed, if the practices here noticed as erroneous, included the whole circle of enjoyment. In addition to the appropriate pleasures of devotion, are the pleasures of retirement, the pleasures of friendship, the pleasures of intellect, and the pleasures of beneficence, to be estimated as nothing?

There will not be found, perhaps, a single person who shall honour these pages with a perusal, who has not been repeatedly told, with an air of imposing gravity, by those who produce cards on a Sunday evening, *that it is better to play than to talk scandal.* Before this pithy axiom was invented, it was not perhaps suspected that Sunday gaming would ever be adduced as an argument in favour of morals. Without entering into the comparative excellence of these two occupations, or presuming to determine which has a claim to pre-eminence of piety, may we not venture to be thankful that these alternatives do not seem to empty the whole stock of human resource;

resource; but that something will still be left to occupy and to interest those who adopt neither the one nor the other?

People in the gay and elegant scenes of life are perpetually complaining that an extensive acquaintance, and the necessity of being constantly engaged in large circles and mixed assemblies, leaves them little leisure for family enjoyment, select conversation, and domestic delights. Others, with no less earnestness, lament that the hurry of public stations, and the necessary demands of active life, allow them no time for any but frivolous reading. Now the recurrence of one Sunday in every week seems to hold out an inviting remedy for both these evils. The sweet and delightful pleasures of family society might then be uninterruptedly enjoyed, by the habitual exclusion of trifling and idle visitors, who do not come to see their friends, but to get rid of themselves. Persons of fashion, living in the same house, and connected by the closest ties, whom business and pleasure keep asunder during the greatest part of the week, would then have an opportunity of spending a little time together, and of cultivating that friendship for each other, that affection for their children, and that intercourse with their Maker, to which the present manners are not *very* favourable. To the other set of complainers, those who can find no time to read, this interval naturally presents itself; and it so happens, that some of the most enlightened men the world ever saw have, not unfrequently, devoted their rare talents to subjects peculiarly suited to this day; and that not merely in the didactic form of sermons, which men of the world affect to disdain; but in every alluring shape which human ingenuity could assume. It can be fortunately produced among a thousand other instances, that the deepest

deepest metaphysician*, the greatest astronomer, the sublimest poet, the acutest reasoner, the politest writer, the most consummate philosopher, and the profoundest investigator of nature, which this, or perhaps any country has produced, have all written on such subjects as are analogous to the business of the Lord's day. Such authors as these, even wits, philosophers, and men of the world, must acknowledge that it is not bigotry to read, nor enthusiasm to commend. Of this illustrious groupe only *one* was a clergyman, which to a certain class of readers will be a strong recommendation: though it is a little hard that the fastidiousness of modern taste should undervalue the learned and pious labours of divines, only because they are *professional.* In every other function, a man's compositions are not the less esteemed because they peculiarly belong to his more immediate business. Blackstone's opinions in jurisprudence are in high reputation, though he was a lawyer: Sydenham is still consulted as oracular in fevers, in spite of his having been a physician: and the Commentaries of Cæsar are of established authority in military operations, notwithstanding he was a soldier.

* Locke, Newton, Milton, Butler, Addison, Bacon, Boyle.

AN

ESTIMATE

OF THE

RELIGION

OF THE

FASHIONABLE WORLD.

There was never found in any age of the world, either Philosophy, or Sect, or Religion, or Law, or Discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian Faith.

LORD BACON.

AN

ESTIMATE

&c. &c. &c.

INTRODUCTION.

THE general design of these pages is to offer some cursory remarks, on the present state of religion among a great part of the polite and the fashionable; not only among that description of persons who, whether from disbelief or whatever other cause, avowedly neglect the duties of Christianity; but among that more decent class also, who, while they acknowledge their belief of its truth by a public profession, and are not inattentive to any of its forms, yet exhibit little of its spirit in their general temper and conduct: It is designed to shew that Christianity, like its divine author, is not only *denied* by those who in so many words disown their submission to its authority, but is *betrayed* by the still more treacherous disciple, even while he cries, *Hail, Master!*

For this visible declension of piety various reasons have been assigned, some of which however do not seem fully adequate to the effects ascribed to them

them. The author of a late popular pamphlet * has accounted for the increased profligacy of the *common people*, by ascribing it, very justly, to the increased dissoluteness of their superiors. And who will deny what he farther affirms—that the general conduct of high and low receives a deep tincture of depravity from the growing neglect of public worship? So far I most cordially agree with the noble author. Nothing can be more obvious, than that the disuse of public worship is naturally followed by a neglect of all religious duties. Energies, which are not called out into action, almost necessarily die in the mind. The soul, no less than the body, requires its stated repairs, and regular renovations. And from the sluggish and procrastinating spirit of man, that religious duty to which no fixed time is assigned, is seldom, it is to be feared, performed at all †.

I must, however, take leave to dissent from the opinion of the noble author, that the too common desertion of persons of rank from the service of the establishment is occasioned in general, as he intimates, by their disapprobation of the Liturgy; as it may more probably be supposed, that the far greater part of them are deterred from going to church by motives widely removed from speculative objections and conscientious scruples.

It would be quite foreign to my present purpose to enter upon the question of the superior utility of a form of prayer for public worship. Most sincerely attached to the establishment myself, not, as far as I am able to judge, from prejudice, but from a fixed and settled conviction; I regard its institutions with

* Hints to an association for preventing Vice and Immorality, written by a Nobleman of the highest rank.

† On this subject see Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton.

a veneration

a veneration at once affectionate and rational. Never need a Christian, except when his own heart is strangely indisposed, fail to derive benefit from its ordinances, and he may bless the overruling providence of God, that, in this instance, the natural variableness and inconstancy of human opinion is, as it were, fixed, and settled, and hedged in, by a stated service so pure, so evangelical, and which is enriched by such a large infusion of sacred Scripture.

If so many among us contemn the service as having been, individually, to *us* fruitless and unprofitable, let us inquire whether the blessing may not be withheld because we are not fervent in asking it. —If we do not find a suitable humiliation in the *Confession*, a becoming earnestness in the *Petitions*, a congenial joy in the *Adoration*, a corresponding gratitude in the *Thanksgivings*, it is because our hearts do not accompany our words; it is because we rest in "the form of godliness," and are contented to remain destitute of its "power." If we are not duly interested when the select portions of Scripture are read to us, it is because we do not as "new born babes desire the sincere milk of the "word, that we may grow thereby."

Perhaps there has not been since the age of the Apostles, a church upon earth in which the public worship was so solemn and so cheerful; so simple yet so sublime; so full of fervour, at the same time so free from enthusiasm; so rich in the gold of Christian antiquity, yet so astonishingly exempt from its dross. That it has imperfections we do not deny, but what are they compared with its general excellence? They are as the spots on the sun's disk, which a sharp observer may detect, but which neither diminish the warmth, nor obscure the brightness.

But

But if those imperfections which are inseparable from all human institutions, are to be alleged as reasons for abstaining to attend on the service of the established church; we must, on the same principle, and on still stronger grounds, abstain from all public worship whatever; and indeed it must be confessed, that the persons of whom we are now speaking are very consistent in this matter.

But the difference of opinion here intimated, is not so much about the Liturgy itself, as the imaginary effects attributed to it in thinning the pews of our people of fashion. The slightest degree of observation serves to contradict this assertion. Those however, who, with the noble author, maintain the other opinion, may satisfy their doubts by inquiring, whether the regular and systematic absentees from church are chiefly to be found among the thinking, the reading, the speculative, and the scrupulous part of mankind.

Even the most negligent attendant on public worship must know, that the obnoxious creed, to whose malignant potency this general desertion is ascribed by the noble author, is never read above three or four Sundays in the year; and even allowing the validity of the objections brought against it, that does not seem a very adequate reason for banishing the most scrupulous and tender consciences from church on the remaining eight-and-forty Sundays of the calendar.

Besides, there is one test which is absolutely unequivocal: this creed is never read at all in the afternoon, any more than the Litany, that other great source of offence and supposed desertion; and yet with all these multiplied reasons for their attendance, do we not see the conscientious crowds of the high born, who abstain from the morning service through their repugnance to subscribe to the dogmas of Athanasius,

or

or the more orthodox clauses of the morning Litany, do we see them, I say, flocking to the evening service, impatient for the exercise of that devotion which had been obstructed by these two objectionable portions of the Liturgy? Do we see them eager to explain the cause of their morning absence, and zealous to vindicate their piety by assiduously attending when the reprobated portions are omitted? So far from it, is it not pretty evident that the general quarrel (with some few exceptions) of those who habitually absent themselves from public worship, is not with the Creed, but the Commandments? With such, to reform the Prayer-Book would go but a little way, unless the New Testament could be also abridged. Cut, and pare, and prune the service of the Church ever so much, still Christianity itself will be found full of formidable objections. Should the Church even give up her abstruse creeds, it would avail but little, unless the Bible would also expunge those rigorous laws which not only prohibit sinful actions, but corrupt inclinations. And to speak honestly, I do not see how such persons as habitually infringe the laws of virtue and sobriety, and who yet are men of acute sagacity, accustomed on other subjects to a consistent train of reasoning; who see consequences in their causes; who behold practical self-denial necessarily involved in the sincere habit of religious observances—I do not see how, with respect to such men, any doctrines reformed, any redundancies lopped, any obscurities brightened, could effect the object of this author's very benevolent and christian wish.

Religious duties are often neglected upon more consistent grounds than the friends of religion are willing to allow. They are often discontinued, not as repugnant to the understanding, not as repulsive to the judgment, but as hostile to a licentious life.—

And

And when a prudent man, after having entered into a solemn convention, finds that he is living in a constant breach of every article of the treaty he has engaged to observe, one cannot much wonder at his getting out of the hearing of the heavy artillery which he knows is planted against him, and against every one who lives in the allowed infraction of the covenant into which every Christian has entered.

For a man of sense who should acknowledge the truth of the doctrine, would find himself obliged to submit to the force of the precept. It is not easy to be a comfortable sinner, without trying, at least, to be a confirmed unbeliever. And as that cannot be atchieved by a wish, the next expedient is to shun the recollection of that belief, and to forget that of which we cannot be ignorant. The smallest remains of faith would embitter a life of libertinism, and to be frequently reminded of the articles of that faith would disturb the ease induced by a neglect of all observances. While to him who retains any impression of Christianity, the wildest festivals of intemperance will be converted into the terrifying feast of Damocles.

That many a respectable non-conformist is kept out of the pale of the establishment by some of the causes noticed by the noble author, cannot be questioned, and a matter of regret it is. But these, however, are often sober thinkers, serious inquirers, conscientious reasoners, whose object we may charitably believe is truth, however they may be deceived as to its nature: but that the same objections banish the great and the gay is not equally evident. Thanks to the indolence and indifference of the times, it is not dogmas or doctrines, it is not abstract reasonings, or puzzling propositions, it is not perplexed argument, or intricate metaphysics, which can now disincline from

from Christianity; so far from it, they cannot even allure to unbelief. Infidelity itself, with all that strong and natural bias which selfishness and appetite entertain in its favour, if it appear in the grave and scholastic form of speculation, argument, or philosophical deduction, may lie almost as quietly on the shelf as the volumes of its most able antagonist; and the cobwebs are almost as seldom brushed from Hobbes as from Hooker. No: prudent scepticism has wisely studied the temper of the times, and skilfully felt the pulse of this relaxed, and indolent, and selfish age. It prudently accommodated itself to the reigning character, when it adopted sarcasm instead of reasoning, and preferred a sneer to an argument. It discreetly judged, that, if it would now gain proselytes, it must shew itself under the bewitching form of a profane bon-mot; must be interwoven in the texture of some amusing history, written with the levity of a romance, and the point and glitter of an epigram: it must embellish the ample margin with some offensive anecdote or impure allusion, and decorate impiety with every loose and meretricious ornament which a corrupt imagination can invent. It must break up the old flimsy system into little mischievous aphorisms, ready for practical purposes: it must divide the rope of sand into little portable parcels, which the shallowest wit can comprehend, and the shortest memory carry away.

Philosophy therefore (as Unbelief, by a patent of its own creation, has lately been pleased to call itself) will not do nearly so much mischief to the present age as its primitive apostles intended: since it requires time, application, and patience to peruse the reasoning veterans of the sceptic school: and these are talents not now very severely devoted to study of any sort, by those who give the law to fashion; especially since, as it was hinted above, the same

principles may be acquired on cheaper terms, and the reputation of being philosophers obtained without the sacrifices of pleasure for the severities of study; since the industry of our literary chemists has extracted the spirit from the gross substance of the old unvendible poison, and exhibited it in the volatile essence of a few sprightly sayings.

If therefore, in this voluptuous age, when a frivolous and relaxing dissipation has infected our very studies, infidelity will not be at the pains of deep research and elaborate investigation, even on such subjects as are congenial to its affections, and promotive of its object; it is vain to expect that Christianity will be more engaging, either as an object of speculation, or as a rule of practice; since it demands a still stronger exertion of those energies which the gay world is not at the pains to exercise, even on the side they approve. For the evidences of Christianity require attention to be comprehended, no less than its doctrines require humility to be received, and its precepts self-denial to be obeyed.

Will it then be uncharitable to pronounce, that the leading mischief not which thins our churches, (for that is not the evil I propose to consider,) but which pervades our whole character, and gives the colour to our general conduct, is *practical irreligion?* an irreligion not so much opposed to a speculative faith, not so much in hostility to the evidences of christianity, as to that spirit, temper and behaviour which christianity inculcates.

On this practical irreligion it is proposed to offer a few hints. After attempting to shew, by a comparison with the religion of the great in preceding ages, that there is a visible decline of piety among the higher ranks—that even those more liberal spirits who neglect not many of the great duties of benevolence, yet hold the severer obligations of piety in

no

no esteem—I shall proceed, though perhaps with too little method, to remark on the notorious *effects* of the decay of this religious principle, as it corrupts our mode of education, infests domestic conduct, spreads the contagion downwards among servants and inferiors, and influences our general manners, habits, and conversation.

But what it is here proposed principally to insist on is, that this defect of religious principle is almost equally fatal, as to all the ends and purposes of genuine piety, whether it appear in the open contempt and defiance of all sacred institutions, or under the more decent veil of external observances, unsupported by such a conduct as is analogous to the christian profession.

I shall proceed with a few remarks on a third class of fashionable characters, who profess to acknowledge christianity as a perfect system of morals, while they deny its divine authority: and conclude with some slight animadversions on the opinion which these modest christians maintain, that morality is the whole of religion.

It must be confessed, however, that manners and principles act reciprocally on each other; and are, by turns, cause, and effect. For instance—the increased relaxation of morals produces the encreased neglect of infusing religious principles in the education of youth: which effect becomes in its turn, a cause; and in due time, when that cause comes to operate, helps on the decline of manners.

CHAP. I.

Decline of Christianity shewn, by a Comparative View of the Religion of the Great in preceding Ages.

If the general position of this little tract be allowed, namely, that religion is at present in no very flourishing state among those whose example, from the high ground on which they stand, guides and governs the rest of mankind, it will not be denied by those who are ever so superficially acquainted with the history of our country, that this has not always been the case. Those who make a fair comparison must allow, that however the present age may be improved in other important and valuable advantages, yet that there is but little appearance remaining among the great and the powerful of that "right-"eousness which exalteth a nation;"—They must confess that there has been a *moral revolution* in the national manners and principles, very little analogous to that great *political* one which we hear so much and so justly extolled. That our public virtue bears little proportion to our public blessings; and that our religion has decreased in a pretty exact proportion to our having secured the means of enjoying it.

That the antipodes to wrong are hardly ever right, was very strikingly illustrated about the middle of the last century, when the fiery and indiscreet zeal of one party was made a pretext for the profligate impiety of the other; who, to the bad principle which dictated a depraved conduct, added the bad

tast

taste of being proud of it:—when even the least abandoned were absurdly apprehensive that an appearance of decency might subject them to the charge of fanaticism, a charge in which they took care to involve real piety as well as enthusiastic pretence, till it became the general fashion to avoid not sin but hypocrisy, to dread no imputation but that of seriousness, and to be more afraid of the virtues which procure a good reputation than of every vice which ever earned a bad one. Party was no longer confined to political distinctions, but became a part of morals, and was carried into religion. The more profligate of the court party began to connect the idea of devotion with that of republicanism; and to prove their aversion to the one, thought they could never cast too much ridicule upon the other. The public taste became debauched, and to be licentious in principle, was thought by many to be the best way of making their court to the restored Monarch, and of proving their abhorrence of the hypocritical side. And *Poems by a person of honour*, the phrase of the day to designate a fashionable author, were often scandalous offences against modesty and virtue.

It was not till piety was thus unfortunately brought into disrepute, that persons of condition thought it made their sincerity, their abilities, or their good breeding questionable, to appear openly on the side of religion. A strict attachment to piety did not subtract from a great reputation. Men were not thought the worse lawyers, generals, ministers, legislators, or historians, for believing, and even defending, the religion of their country. The gallant Sir Philip Sidney, the rash but heroic Essex, the politic and sagacious Burleigh, the all-accomplished Falkland*, not only publicly owned their belief in

* Lord Falkland assisted the great Chillingworth in his incomparable work, The Religion of a Protestant.

christianity,

christianity, but even wrote some things of a religious nature *. These instances, and many other which might be adduced, are not, it will be allowed, selected from among contemplative recluses, grave divines, or authors by profession; but from the busy, the active, and the illustrious; from public characters, from men of strong passions, beset with great temptations; distinguished actors on the stage of life; and whose respective claims to the title of fine gentlemen, brave soldiers, or able statesmen, have never been called into question.

What would the Hales, and the Clarendons, and the Somerses † have said, had they been told that the time was at no great distance when that sacred book, for which they thought it no derogation from their wisdom or their dignity to entertain the profoundest reverence; the book which they made the rule of their faith, the object of their most serious study, and the foundation of their eternal hope; that this book would one day be of little more use to men in high public stations, than to be the instrument of an oath; and that the sublimest rites of the christian religion would soon be considered as little more than a necessary qualification for a place, or the legal preliminary to an office.

This indeed is the boasted period of free enquiry and liberty of thinking: but it is the peculiar character of the present age, that its mischiefs often as-

* See that equally elegant and authentic work, *The Anecdotes of Royal and Noble Authors.*

† This consummate statesman was not only remarkable for a strict attendance on the public duties of religion, but for maintaining them with equal exactness in his family, at a period too when religion was most discountenanced.

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sume the most alluring forms; and that the most alarming evils not only look so like goodness as to be often mistaken for it, but are sometimes mixed up with so much real good, as often to disguise, though never to counteract, their malignity. Under the beautiful mask of an enlightened philosophy, all religious restraints are set at nought; and some of the deadliest wounds have been aimed at christianity, in works written in avowed vindication of the most amiable of all the christian principles*. Even the prevalence of a liberal and warm philanthropy is secretly sappinig the foundation of christian morals, because many of its champions allow themselves to live in the open violation of the severer duties of justice and sobriety, while they are contending for the gentler ones of charity and beneficence.

The strong and generous bias in favour of universal toleration, noble as the principal itself is, has engendered a dangerous notion that all error is innocent. Whether it be owing to this, or to whatever other cause, it is certain that the discriminating features of the christian religion are every day growing into less repute; and it is become the fashion, even among the better sort, to evade, to lower, or to generalize, its most distinguishing peculiarities.

There is so little of the Author of christianity left in his own religion, that an apprehensive believer is ready to exclaim, with the woman at the sepulchre,

* See particularly *Voltaire sur la Tolerance*. This is a common artifice of that insidious author. In this instance he has made use of the popularity he obtained in the fanatical tragedy at Thoulouse (the murder of Calas) to discredit, though in the most guarded manner, christianity itself; degrading martyrdoms, denying the truth of the Pagan persecutions, &c. &c. And by mixing some truths with many falsehoods, by assuming an amiable candour, and professing to serve the interests of goodness, he treacherously contrives to leave on the mind of the unguarded reader impressions the most unfavourable to christianity.

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" They have taken away my Lord, and I know not " where they have laid him." The locality of Hell and the existence of an Evil Spirit are annihilated, or considered as abstract ideas. When they are alluded to, it is periphrastically; or they are discontinued not on the ground of their being awful and terrible, but they are set aside as topics too vulgar for the polished, too illiberal for the learned, and as savouring too much of credulity for the enlightened.

While we glory in having freed ourselves from the trammels of human authority, are we not turning our liberty into licentiousness, and wantonly struggling to throw off the *divine* authority too? Freedom of thought is the glory of the human mind, while it is confined within its just and sober limits; but though we may think ourselves accountable for *opinions* at no earthly tribunal, yet it should be remembered that thoughts as well as actions are amenable at the bar of God: and though we may rejoice that the tyranny of the spiritual Procrustes is so far annihilated, that we are in no danger of having our opinions lopped or lengthened till they are brought to fit the measure of human caprice, yet there is still a standard by which not only actions are weighed, but opinions are judged; and every sentiment which is clearly inconsistent with the revealed will of God, is as much throwing off *his* dominion as the breach of any of his moral precepts. This cuts up by the roots that popular and independant phrase, that " thoughts are " free," for in this view we are no more at liberty to indulge opinions in opposition to the express word of God than we are at liberty to infringe practically on his commandments.

There is then surely one test by which it is no mark of intolerance to try the principles of men, namely, the *Law and the Testimony:* and on applying to this touchstone, it is impossible not to lament,

that,

that, while a more generous spirit governs our judgment, a purer principle does not seem to regulate our lives. May it not be said, that, while we are justly commended for thinking charitably of the opinions of others, we seem, in return, as if we were desirous of furnishing them with an opportunity of exercising their candour by the laxity of principle in which we indulge ourselves? If the hearts of men were as firmly united to each other by the bond of charity as some pretend, they could not fail of being united to God also by one common principle of piety. And christian piety furnishes the only certain source of all charitable judgment, as well as of all virtuous conduct.

Instead of abiding by the salutary precept of *judging no man*, it is the fashion to exceed our commission, and to fancy every body to be in a safe state. "Judge not" is the precise limit of our rule. There is no more encouragement to judge falsely on the side of worldly candour, than there is to judge harshly on the side of Christian charity. In forming our notions we have to chuse between the bible and the world, between the rule and the practice. Where these do not agree, it is left to the judgment of believers, at least, by which we are to decide. But we never act, in religious concerns, by the same rule of common sense and equitable judgment which governs us on other occasions. In weighing any commodity, its weight is determined by some generally allowed standard; and if the commodity be heavier or lighter than the standard weight, we add to or take from it: but we never break, or clip, or reduce the weight to suit the thing we are weighing; because the common consent of mankind has agreed that the one shall be considered as the standard to ascertain the value of the other. But, in weighing our principles by the standard of the Gospel, we do

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just the reverse. Instead of bringing our opinions and actions to the *balance of the sanctuary*, to determine and rectify their comparative deficiencies, we lower and reduce the standard of the scripture-doctrines till we have accommodated them to our own purposes: so that, instead of trying others and ourselves by God's unerring rule, we try the truth of God's rule by its conformity or non-conformity to our own depraved notions and corrupt practices.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Benevolence allowed to be the reigning Virtue, but not exclusively *the Virtue of the present Age.—Benevolence not the Whole of Religion, though one of its most characteristic Features. Whether Benevolence proceeds from a religious Principle, will be more infallibly known by the general Disposition of Time, Fortune, and the common Habits of Life, than from a few occasional Acts of Bounty.*

To all the remonstrance and invective of the preceding chapter, there will not fail to be opposed that which we hear every day so loudly insisted on,—the decided superiority of the present age in other and better respects. It will be said, that even those who neglect the outward forms of religion, exhibit however the best proofs of the best principles; that the unparalleled instances of charity of which we are continual witnesses; that the many striking acts of public bounty, and the various new and noble improvements in this shining virtue, justly entitle the present age to be called, by way of eminence, *the age of benevolence.*

It is with the liveliest joy I acknowledge the delightful truth. Liberality flows with a full tide through a thousand channels. There is scarcely a newspaper but records some meeting of men of fortune for the most salutary purposes. The noble and numberless structures for the relief of distress, which

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are the ornament and the glory of our metropolis, proclaim a species of munificence unknown to former ages. Subscriptions, not only to hospitals, but to various other valuable institutions, are obtained almost as soon as solicited. And who but must wish that these beautiful monuments of benevolence may become every day more numerous, and more extended!

Yet, with all these allowed and obvious excellencies, it is not quite clear whether something too much has not been said of the liberality of the present age, in a comparative view with that of those ages which preceded it. A general alteration of habits and manners has at the same time multiplied public bounties and private distress; and it is scarcely a paradox, to say that there was probably less misery when there was less munificence.

If an increased benevolence now ranges through and relieves a wider compass of distress; yet still, if those examples of luxury and dissipation which promote that distress are still *more* increased, this makes the good done bear little proportion to the evil promoted. If the miseries removed by the growth of charity fall, both in number and weight, far below those which are caused by the growth of vice and disorder; if we find that, though bounty is extended, yet those corruptions which make bounty so necessary are extended also, almost beyond calculation; if it appear that, though more objects are relieved by our money, yet incomparably more are debauched by our licentiousness—the balance perhaps will not turn out so decidedly in favour of the times as we are willing to imagine.

If then the most valuable species of charity is that which prevents distress by preventing or lessening vice, the greatest and most inevitable cause of want, —we ought not so highly to exalt the bounty of the great

great in the present day, in preference to that broad shade of protection, patronage, and maintenance, which the wide-spread bounty of their forefathers stretched out over whole villages, I had almost said whole provinces. When a few noblemen in a county, like their own stately oaks (paternal oaks! which were not often set upon a card) extended their sheltering branches to shield all the underwood of the forest—when there existed a kind of passive charity, a negative sort of benevolence, which did good of itself; and without effort, exertion, or expence, produced the effect of all, and performed the best functions of bounty, though it did not aspire to the dignity of its name—it was simply this:—*great people staid at home*; and the sober pomp and orderly magnificence of a noble family, residing at their own castle great part of the year, contributed in the most natural way to the maintenance of the poor; and in a good degree prevented their distress, which it must however thankfully be confessed it is the laudable object of modern bounty to relieve. A man of fortune might not then, it is true, so often dine in public for the benefit of the poor; but the poor were more regularly and comfortably fed with the abundant crumbs which then fell from the rich man's table. Whereas it cannot be denied that the prevailing mode of living has pared real hospitality to the very quick; and, though the remark may be thought ridiculous, it is a material disadvantage to the poor that the introduction of the modern style of luxury has rendered the remains of the most costly table but of small value.

But even allowing the boasted superiority of modern benevolence, still it will not be inconsistent with the object of the present design, to enquire whether the diffusion of this branch of charity, though the most lovely offspring of religion, be yet

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any positive proof of the prevalence of religious principle? and whether it be not the fashion rather to consider benevolence as a substitute for Christianity than as an evidence of it?

It seems to be one of the reigning errors among the better sort, to reduce all religion into benevolence, and all benevolence into alms-giving. The wide and comprehensive idea of Christian charity is compressed into the slender compass of a little pecuniary relief. This species of benevolence is indeed a bright gem among the ornaments of a Christian; but by no means furnishes all the jewels of his crown, which derives its lustre from the associated radiance of every christian grace. Besides, the genuine virtues are all of the same family; and it is only by being seen in company with each other and with Piety their common parent, that they are certainly known to be legitimate.

But it is the property of the *christian* virtues, that, like all other amiable members of the same family, while each is doing its own particular duty, it is contributing to the prosperity of the rest; and the larger the family the better they live together, as no one can advance itself without labouring for the advancement of the whole: thus no man can be benevolent on christian principles without self-denial; and so of the other virtues: each is connected with some other, and all with religion.

I already anticipate the obvious and hackneyed reply, that "whoever be the instrument, and whatever be the motive of bounty, still the poor are "equally relieved, and therefore the end is the same." And it must be confessed that those compassionate hearts, who cannot but be earnestly anxious that the distressed should be relieved at any rate, should not too scrupulously enquire into any cause of which the effect is so beneficial. Nor indeed will candour scrutinize

tinize too curiously into the errors of any life of which benevolence will always be allowed to be the shining ornament, while it does not pretend to be the atoning virtue.

Let me not be misrepresented, as if I were seeking to detract from the value of this amiable feeling; we do not surely lower the practice by seeking to ennoble the principle; the action will not be impaired by mending the motive: and no one will be likely to give the poor less because he seeks to please God more.

One cannot then help wishing that pecuniary bounty were not only not practised, but that it were not sometimes enjoined too, as a redeeming virtue.—In many conversations (I had almost said in many charity-sermons) it is insinuated as if a little alms-giving could pay off old scores contracted by favourite indulgences. This, though often done by well-meaning men to advance the interests of some present pious purpose, yet has the mischievous effect of those medicines which, while they may relieve a local complaint, are yet undermining the general habit.

That great numbers who are not influenced by so high a principle as Christianity holds out, are yet truly compassionate without hypocrisy and without ostentation, who can doubt? But who that feels the beauty of benevolence can avoid being solicitous, not only that its offerings should comfort the receiver, but return in blessings to the bosom of the giver, by springing from such motives, and being accompanied by such a temper as shall redound to his eternal good! For that the benefit is the same to the object, whatever be the character of the benefactor, is but an uncomfortable view of things to a real Christian, whose compassion reaches to the souls of men. Such a one longs to see the charitable giver as happy as he is endeavouring to make the object of his bounty; but

such

such a one knows that no happiness can be fully and finally enjoyed but on the solid basis of Christian piety.

For as religion is not, on the one hand, merely an opinion or a sentiment, so neither is it, on the other, merely an act or a performance; but it is a disposition, a habit, a temper: it is not a name, but a nature: it is a turning the whole mind to God: it is a concentration of all the powers and affections of the soul into one steady point, an uniform desire to please *Him*. This desire will naturally and necessarily manifest itself in our doing all the good we can to our fellow-creatures in every possible way; for it will be found that neither of the two parts into which practical religion is divided, can be performed with any degree of perfection but by those who unite both: as it may be questioned if any man really *does* "love his neighbour as himself," who does not first endeavour to "love God with all his heart." As genius has been defined to be strong general powers of mind, accidentally determined to some particular pursuit, so piety may be denominated a strong general disposition of the heart to every thing that is right, breaking forth into every excellent action, as the occasion presents itself. The temper must be ready in the mind, and the whole heart must be prepared and trained to every act of virtue to which it may be called out.—For religious principles are like the military exercise; they keep up an habitual state of preparation for actual service; and, by never relaxing the discipline, the real Christian is ready for every duty to which he may be commanded. Right actions best prove the existence of religion in the heart; but they are evidences, not causes.

Whether therefore a man's charitable actions proceed from religious principle, he will be best able to ascertain

ascertain by scrutinizing into what is the general disposition of his time and fortune, and by observing whether his pleasures and expences are habitually regulated with a view to enable him to be more or less useful to others.

It is in vain that he possess what is called by the courtesy of fashion *the best heart in the world* (a character we every day hear applied to the libertine and the prodigal) if he squander his time and estate in such a round of extravagant indulgences and thoughtless dissipation as leaves him little money and less leisure for nobler purposes. It makes but little difference whether a man is prevented from doing good by hard-hearted parsimony or an unprincipled extravagance; the stream of usefulness is equally cut off by both.

The mere *casual* benevolence of any man can have little claim to solid esteem; nor does any charity deserve the name, which does not grow out of a steady conviction that it is his bounden duty; which does not spring from a settled propensity to obey the whole will of God; which is not therefore made a part of the general plan of his conduct; and which does not lead him to order the whole scheme of his affairs with an eye to it.

He therefore who does not habituate himself to certain interior restraints, who does not live in a regular course of self-renunciation, will not be likely often to perform acts of beneficence, when it becomes necessary to convert to such purposes any of that time or money which appetite, temptation, or vanity solicit him to divert to other purposes.

And surely he who seldom sacrifices one darling indulgence, who does not subtract one gratification from the incessant round of his enjoyments, when the indulgence would obstruct his capacity of doing good, or when the sacrifice would enlarge his power,

does not deserve the name of *benevolent*. And for such an unequivocal criterion of charity, to whom are we to look but to the conscientious Christian? No other spirit but that by which he is governed, can subdue self-love: and where self-love is the predominant passion, benevolence can have but a feeble, or an accidental dominion.

Now if we look around, and remark the excesses of luxury, the costly diversions, and the intemperate dissipation in which numbers of professing Christians indulge themselves, can any stretch of candour, can even that tender sentiment by which we are enjoined "to hope" and to "believe all things," enable us to hope and believe that such are actuated by a spirit of Christian benevolence, merely because we see them perform some casual acts of charity, which the spirit of the world can contrive to make extremely compatible with a voluptuous life; and the cost of which, after all, bears but little proportion to that of any one vice, or even vanity!

Men will not believe that there is hardly any one human good quality which will know and keep its proper bounds, without the restraining influence of religious principle. There is, for instance, great danger lest a constant attention to so right a practice as an invariable œconomy, should incline the heart to the love of money. Nothing can effectually counteract this natural propensity but the Christian habit of devoting those retrenched expences to some good purpose; and then œconomy, instead of narrowing the heart, will enlarge it, by inducing a constant association of benevolence with frugality. An habitual attention to the wants of others is the only wholesome regulator of our own expences; and carries with it a whole train of virtues, disinterestedness, sobriety, and temperance. And those who live in the custom of levying constant taxes on their vanities for such purposes,

poses, serve the poor still less than they serve themselves. For if they are charitable upon true Christian principles, "they are laying up for themselves "a good foundation against the time to come."

Thus when a vein of Christianity runs through the whole mass of man's life, it gives a new value to all his actions, and a new character to all his views. It transmutes prudence and œconomy into Christian virtues; and every offering that is presented on the altar of charity becomes truly consecrated, when it is the gift of obedience, and the price of self-denial. Piety is that fire from heaven that can alone kindle the sacrifice, which through the mediation and intercession of our great High Priest "will go up for a "memorial before God."

On the other hand, when any act of bounty is performed by way of composition with our Maker, either as a purchase or an expiation of unallowed indulgences; though, even in this case, God (who makes all the passions of men subservient to his good purposes) can make the gift equally beneficial to the receiver, yet it is surely not too severe to say, that to the giver such acts are an unfounded dependence, a deceitful refuge, a broken staff.

CHAP. III.

The Neglect of Religious Education, both a Cause and a Consequence of the Decline of Christianity.—No Moral Restraints.--Religion only incidentally taught, not as a Principle of Action. A few of the many Causes which dispose the Young to entertain low Opinions of Religion.

LET not the truly pious be offended, as if, in the present chapter, which is intended to treat of the notorious neglect of Religious Education, I meant to insinuate that the principles and tempers of Christianity may be formed in the young mind, by the mere mechanical operation of early institution, without the co-operating aid of the Holy Spirit of God. To imply this would be indeed to betray a lamentable ignorance of human nature, of the disorder that sin has introduced, of the inefficacy of mere human means; and entirely to mistake the genius, and overlook the most obvious and important truths of our holy religion.

It must however be allowed, that the supreme Being works chiefly by means; and though it be confessed that no defect of education, no corruption of manners can place any out of the reach of the Divine influences, (for it is under such circumstances perhaps that some of the most extraordinary instances of Divine grace have been manifested,) yet it must be owned, that instructing children in principles of religion, and

and giving them early habits of temperance and piety, is the way in which we may most confidently expect the Divine blessing. And that it is a work highly pleasing to God, and which will be most assuredly accomplished by his gracious energy, we may judge from what he says of his faithful servant Abraham; "I know him that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the "way of the Lord."

But religion is the only thing in which we seem to look for the end, without making use of the means; and yet it would not be more surprising if we were to expect that our children should become artists and scholars without being bred to arts and languages, than it is to look for a Christian world, without a Christian education.

The noblest objects can yield no delight, if there be not in the mind a disposition to relish them. There must be a congruity between the mind and the object, in order to produce any capacity of enjoyment. To the Mathematician, demonstration is pleasure; to the Philosopher, the study of nature; to the Voluptuary, the gratification of his appetite; to the Poet, the pleasures of the imagination. These objects they each respectively pursue, as pleasures adapted to that part of their nature which they have been accustomed to indulge and cultivate.

Now as men will be apt to act consistently with their general views and habitual tendencies, would it not be absurd to expect that the philosopher should look for his sovereign good at a ball, or the sensualist in the pleasures of intellect or piety? None of these ends are answerable to the general views of the respective pursuer; they are not correspondent to his ideas; they are not commensurate to his aims. The sublimest pleasures can afford little gratification where a taste for them has not been previously formed.

religious instruction ought to be deferred until the mind be capable of chusing for itself—that is, until it be so pre-occupied as to leave neither room nor relish for the articles of Christian faith, or the rules of Christian obedience. The advice of the wise king of Israel of "training up a child in the way he should "go," had not then become obsolete; and the truth of his assertion, in the remaining clause of the passage, was happily realized in the sincere, though late, return of many a wanderer.

Even in the very laws of our nature, there seems to be a gracious provision for promoting the final efficacy of early religious instruction. When the old man has no longer any relish left for his accustomed gratifications, in what way does he endeavour to fill up the void? Is it not by sending back his thoughts to his early years, and endeavouring to live over again in idea those scenes which, in this distant retrospect, appear far more delightful than he had found them to be at the actual period of enjoyment? Disgusted at every thing around him, and disappointed in those pursuits to which he had once looked forward with all the ardour of hope; but to which he now feels he has sacrificed in vain, his quiet, and perhaps his integrity, he takes a pensive pleasure in reviewing the season when his mind was yet cheerful and innocent; and even the very cares and anxieties of that happy period appear to him now, in a more captivating form than any pleasures he can yet hope to enjoy. What then is more natural, I had almost said more certain, than that if the principles of religion were inculcated, and the feelings of devotion excited in his mind in that most susceptible season of life, they should now revive as well as other contemporary impressions, and present themselves in a point of view, the more interesting, because, while all other instances of youthful occupation can be only

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recollected, those may be called up into fresh existence, and be enjoyed even more perfectly than before.

The defects of memory also, which old age induces, will, in this instance, assist rather than obstruct. It almost universally happens, that the more recent transactions are those soonest forgotten, while the events of youth and childhood are remembered with accuracy. If therefore pious principles have been implanted, they will, even by the course of nature, be recollected, while those things which most contributed to hinder their growth, are swept from the memory. What a powerful encouragement then does this consideration afford! or rather what an indispensible obligation does it lay upon parents, to store the minds of their children with the seeds of piety! And on the other hand, what unnatural barbarity is it, irretrievably to shut up this last refuge of the wretched, by a neglect of this duty; and to render it impossible for those who had "stood all the day idle," to be called (at least without a miracle) even at the eleventh hour!

No one surely will impute to bigotry or enthusiasm, the lamenting, or even remonstrating against such desperate negligence; nor can it be deemed illiberal to inquire, Whether even a still greater evil does not exist? I mean, Whether pernicious principles are not as strenously inculcated as those of real virtue and happiness are discountenanced? Whether young men are not expressly taught to take custom and fashion as the ultimate and exclusive standard by which to try their principles and to weigh their actions? Whether some idol of false honour be not consecrated and set up for them to Worship? Whether, even among the better sort, reputation be not held out as a motive of sufficient energy to produce virtue, in a world where yet the greatest vices are every

every day practised openly, without at all obstructing the reception of those who practice them into the best company? Whether resentment be not ennobled; and pride, and many other passions, erected into honourable virtues—virtues not less repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity than obvious and gross vices? Will it be thought impertinent to enquire if the awful doctrines of a perpetually present Deity, and a future righteous judgment, are early impressed and lastingly engraven on the hearts and consciences of our high-born youth?

Perhaps, if there be any one particular in which we fall remarkably below the politer nations of antiquity, it is in that part of education which has a reference to purity of mind, and the discipline of the heart.

The great secret of religious education, which seems banished from the present practice, consists in training young men to an habitual interior restraint, an early government of the affections, and a course of self-controul over those tyrannizing inclinations which have so natural a tendency to enslave the human heart. Without this habit of moral restraint which is one of the fundamental laws of Christian virtue, though men may, from natural temper, often *do* good, yet it is impossible that they should ever *be* good. Without the vigorous exercise of this controuling principle, the best dispositions and the most amiable qualities will go but a little way towards establishing a virtuous character. For the best dispositions will be easily overcome by the concurrence of passion and temptation, in a heart where the passions have not been accustomed to this wholesome discipline; and the most amiable qualities will but more easily betray their possessor, unless the heart be fortified by repeated acts and long habits of resistance.

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In this, as in various other instances, we may blush at the superiority of Pagan institution. Were the Roman youth taught to imagine themselves always in the awful presence of Cato, in order to habituate them betimes to suppress base sentiments, and to excite such as were generous and noble? And should not the Christian youth be continually reminded, that a greater than Cato is here? Should they not be trained to the habit of acting under the constant impression, that *He* to whom they must one day be accountable for intentions, as well as words and actions, is witness to the one as well as the other? that he not only is "about their path," but "understands their "very thoughts?"

Were the disciples of a Pagan* leader taught that it was a motive sufficient to compel their obedience to any rule, whether they liked it or not, that it had the authority of their teacher's name? were the bare words, *the master hath said it*, sufficient to settle all disputes, and to subdue all reluctance? And shall the scholars of a more divine teacher, who have a code of laws written by God himself, be contented with a lower rule, or abide by a meaner authority? And is any argument drawn from human considerations likely to operate more forcibly on a dependant being, than that simple but grand assertion, with which so many of the precepts of our religion are introduced—Because, THUS SAITH THE LORD?

It is doing but little, in the infusion of first principles, to obtain the bare assent of the understanding to the existence of one Supreme Power, unless the heart and affections go along with the conviction, by our conceiving of that power as intimately connected with ourselves. A feeling temper will be but lit-

* Pythagoras.

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tle affected with the cold idea of a *geometrical* God, as the excellent Pascal expresses it, who merely adjusts all the parts of matter, and keeps the elements in order. Such a mind will be but little moved, unless he be taught to consider his Maker under the interesting and endearing representation which revealed religion gives of him. That "God is," will be to him rather an alarming than a consolatory idea; till he be persuaded of the subsequent proposition, that "he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek "him." Nay, if natural religion *does* even acknowledge one awful attribute, that "God is just," it will only increase the terror of a tender conscience, till it be learned from the fountain of truth, that he is "the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

But if the great sanctions of our religion are not deeply engraven on the heart, where shall we look for any other adequate curb to the fiery spirit of youth? For, let the elements be ever so kindly mixed in a human composition, let the natural temper be ever so amiable, still whenever a man ceases to think himself an accountable being, what motive can he have for resisting a strong temptation to a present good, when he has no dread that he shall thereby forfeit a greater future good?

It may perhaps be objected, that this deep sense of religion would interfere with the general purpose of education, which is designed to qualify men for the business of human life, and not to train up a race of monks and ascetics.

There is however so little real solidity in this specious objection, that I am firmly persuaded, that if religious principles were more deeply impressed on the heart, even the things of this world would be much better carried on. For where are we to look for all the qualities which constitute the man of business; for punctuality, diligence, and application,

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for such attention in doing every thing in its proper day, (the great hinge on which business turns,) as among men of principle? Oeconomy of time, truth in observing his word, never daring to deceive or to disappoint—these form the very essence of an active and an useful character; and for these to whom shall we most naturally look? Who is so little likely to be "slothful in business" as he who is "fervent in spirit?" And will not he be most regular in dealing with men, who is most diligent in "serving the "Lord?"

But, it may be said, allowing that religion does not necessarily spoil a man of *business*, yet it would effectually defeat those accomplishments, and counteract that fine breeding, which essentially constitute the *gentleman*.

This again is so far from being a natural consequence, that, supposing all the other real advantages of parts, education, and society, to be equally taken into the account, there is no doubt but that, in point of true politeness, a real Christian would beat the world at its own weapons, the world itself being judge.

It must be confessed that, in the present corrupt state of things, there is scarcely any one contrivance for which we are more obliged to the inventions of mankind than for that of politeness, as there is perhaps no screen in the world which hides so many ugly sights; yet while we allow that there never was so admirable a substitute for real goodness as good breeding, it is certain that the principles of Christianity put into action, would of themselves produce more genuine politeness than any maxims drawn from motives of human vanity or worldly convenience. If *love*, *peace*, *joy*, *long-suffering*, *gentleness*, *patience*, *goodness*, and *meekness*, may be thought instruments to produce sweetness of manners, these weare expressly

ly told are "the fruits of the spirit." If mourning with the afflicted, rejoicing with the happy; if to "esteem others better than ourselves;" if "to take "the lowest room;" if "not to seek our own;" if "not to behave ourselves unseemly; if "not to "speak great swelling words of vanity"—if these are amiable, engaging, and polite parts of behaviour, then would the documents of Saint Paul make as true a fine gentleman as the *Courtier of Castiglione*, or even the *Letters of Lord Chesterfield* himself. Then would simulation, and dissimulation, and all the nice shades and delicate gradations of passive and active deceit, be rendered superfluous; and the affections of every heart be won by a shorter and a surer way than by the elegant obliquities of this late popular preceptor, whose mischiefs have outlived his reputation; and who, notwithstanding the present just declension of his fame, greatly helped, during its transient meridian, to relax the general nerve of virtue, and has left a taint upon the public morals, of which we are still sensible.

That self-abasement then, which is inseparable from true Christianity, and the external signs of which good-breeding knows so well how to assume; and those charities which suggest invariable kindness to others, even in the smallest things, would, if left to their natural workings, produce that gentleness which it is one great object of a polite education to imitate. They would produce it too without effort and without exertion; for being inherent in the substance, it would naturally discover itself on the surface.

For however useful the institutions of polished society may be found, yet they can never alter the eternal difference between right and wrong, or convert appearances into realities; they cannot transform decency into virtue, nor make politeness pass for principle. And the advocates for fashionable breeding should

should be humbled to reflect, that every convention of artificial manners was adopted not to *cure*, but to *conceal*, deformity: that though the superficial civilities of elegant life tend to make this corrupt world a more tolerable place than it would be without them, yet they never will be considered as a substitute for truth, nor a commutation for virtue, by HIM who is to pass the definitive sentence on the characters of men.

Among the many prejudices which the young and the gay entertain against religion, one is, that it is the declared enemy to wit and genius. But, says one of its wittiest champions*, "Piety enjoins no "man to be dull:" and it will be found on a fair enquiry, that though it cannot be denied that irreligion has had able men for its advocates, yet they have never been the *most* able. Nor can any learned profession, any department in letters or in science, produce a champion on the side of unbelief, but Christianity has a still greater name to oppose it; *philosophers* themselves being judges.

He who studied the book of nature with a scrutiny which has scarcely been permitted to any other mortal eye, was deeply learned in the book of God†. And the ablest writer on the intellect of man, has left one of the ablest treatises *on the Reasonableness of Christianity*. This essay of Mr. Locke on the *Human Understanding*, will stand up to latest ages, as a monument of wisdom: while Hume's posthumous work, *the Essay on Suicide*, which had excited such large expectations, has been long since forgotten.‡

* Dr. South.

† Sir Isaac Newton.

‡ The Essay on Suicide was published soon after Mr. Hume's death It might mortify his liberal mind (if matter and motion were capable of consciousness) to learn, that this his dying legacy, the last concentrated effect of his genius and his principles, sent from the grave as it were, by a man

Pascal has proved that as much rhetoric and logic too may be shown in defending revelation as in attacking it. His geometrical spirit was not likely to take up with any proofs but such as came as near to demonstration as the nature of the subject would admit. *Erasmus* in his writings on the ignorance of the Monks, and the Provincial Letters on the fallacies of the Jesuits, while they exhibit as entire a freedom from bigotry, exhibit also as much pointed wit, and as much sound reasoning, as can be found in the whole mass of modern Philosophy.

But while the young adopt the opinion from one class of writers, that religious men are weak men, they acquire from another class a notion that they are ridiculous. And this opinion, by mixing itself with their common notions, and deriving itself from their very amusements, is the more mischievous, as it is imbibed without suspicion, and entertained without resistance.

One common medium through which they take this false view is, those favourite works of wit and humour, so captivating to youthful imaginations, where no small part of the author's success perhaps has been owing to his dexterously introducing a pi-

a man so justly renowned in other branches of literature, produced no sensation on the public mind. And that the precious information that every man had a right to be his own executioner, was considered as a privilege so little desirable, that it probably had not the glory of converting one *cross road* into a cimetry. It is to the credit of this country that fewer copies of this work were sold than perhaps ever was the case with a writer of so much eminence. A more impotent act of wickedness has seldom been atchieved, or one which has had the glory of making fewer persons wicked or miserable. That cold and cheerless oblivion which he held out as a refuge to beings who had solaced themselves with the soothing hope of immorality has, by a memorable retribution, overshadowed his last labour; the Essay on Suicide being already as much forgotten as he promised the best man that they themselves would be. And this favourite work became at once a prey to that forgetfulness to which he had consigned the whole human race.

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ous character with so many virtues, that it is impossible not to love him; yet tinctured with so many absurdities, that it is equally impossible not to laugh at him. The reader's memory will furnish him with too many instances of what is here meant. The slightest touches of a witty malice can make the best character ridiculous. It is effected by any little aukwardness, absence of mind, an obsolete phrase, a formal pronunciation, a peculiarity of gesture. Or if such a character be brought by unsuspecting honesty, and credulous goodness, into some foolish scrape, it will stamp on him an impression of ridicule so indelible, that all his worth shall not be able to efface it: and the young, who do not always separate their ideas very carefully, shall ever after, by this early and false association, conceive of piety as having something essentially ridiculous in itself.

But one of the most infallible arts by which the inexperienced are engaged on the side of irreligion, is that popular air of candour, good-nature, and toleration, which it so invariably puts on. While sincere piety is often accused of moroseness and severity, because it cannot hear the doctrines on which it founds its eternal hopes derided without emotion; indifference and unbelief purchase the praise of candour at an easy price, because they neither suffer grief nor express indignation at hearing the most awful truths ridiculed, or the most solemn obligations set at nought. They do not engage on equal terms. The infidel appears good humoured from his very levity; but the Christian cannot jest on subjects which involve his everlasting salvation.

The scoffers whom young people hear talk, and the books they hear quoted, falsely charge their own injurious opinions on Christianity, and then unjustly

accuse her of being the monster they have made. They dress her up with the sword of persecution in one hand, and the flames of intolerance in the other; and then ridicule the sober-minded for worshipping an idol which their misrepresentation has rendered as malignant as Moloch. In the mean time they affect to seize on benevolence with exclusive appropriation as their own cardinal virtue, and to accuse of a bigotted cruelty that narrow spirit which points out the perils of licentiousness, and the terrors of a future account. And yet this benevolence, with all its tender mercies, is not afraid nor ashamed to endeavour at snatching away from humble piety the comfort of a present hope, and the bright prospect of a felicity that shall have no end. It does not however seem a very probable means of increasing the stock of human happiness, to plunder mankind of that principle, by the destruction of which friendship is robbed of its bond, society of its security, patience of its motive, morality of its foundation, integrity of its reward, sorrow of its consolation, life of its balm, and death of its support.*

It will not perhaps be one of the meanest advantages of a better state that, as the will shall be reformed, so the judgment shall be rectified; that "evil shall no more be called good," nor the "churl "liberal;" nor the plunderer of our best possession,

* Young persons too are liable to be misled by that extreme disingenuousness of the new philosophers, when writing on every thing and person connected with revealed religion. These authors often quote satirical poets as grave historical authorities; for instance, because Juvenal has said that the Jews were so narrow-minded that they refused to show a spring of water or the right road to an inquiring traveller who was not of their religion, I make little doubt but many an ignorant free thinker has actually gone away with the belief, that such good-natured acts of information were actually forbidden by the law of Moses.

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our principles, *benevolent*. Then it will be evident that greater injury could not be done to truth, nor greater violence to language, than by attempting to wrest from Christianity that benevolence which is in fact her most appropriate and peculiar attribute.—"A new commandment give I unto you, that ye "love one another." If benevolence be "good "will to men," it was that which angelic messengers were not thought too high to announce, nor a much higher being than Angels too great to teach by his example, and to illustrate by his death. It was the citerion, the very watch word as it were, by which he intended his religion and his followers should be distinguished. "By this shall all men "know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love "one to another." Besides, it is the very genius of Christianity to extirpate all selfishness, on whose vacated ground benevolence naturally and necessarily plants itself,

But not to run through all the particulars which obstruct the growth of piety in young persons, I shall only name one more. They hear much declamation from the fashionable reasoners against the contracted and selfish spirit of Christianity—that it is of a sordid temper, works for pay, and looks for reward.

This Jargon of French philosophy, which prates of pure disinterested goodness acting for its own sake, and equally despising punishment and disdaining recompence, indicates as little knowledge of human nature as of Christian revelation, when it addresses man as a being made up of pure intellect, without any mixture of passions, and who can be made happy without hope, and virtuous without fear. These Philosophers affect to be more independent than Moses, more disinterested than Christ himself;

himself; for "Moses had respect to the recompence "of reward;" and Christ "endured the cross and "despised the shame, for the joy that was set be- "fore him."

A creature hurried away by the impulse of some impetuous inclination, is not likely to be restrained (if he be restrained at all) by a cold reflection on the beauty of virtue. If the dread of offending God, and incurring his everlasting displeasure, cannot stop him, how shall a weaker motive do it? When we see that the powerful sanctions which religion holds out are too often an ineffectual curb; to think of attaining the same end by feebler means, is as if one should expect to make a watch go the better by breaking the main spring; nay, as absurd as if the philosopher who inculcates the doctrine should undertake, with one of his fingers, to lift an immense weight which had resisted the powers of the crane and the lever.

On calm and temperate spirits indeed, in the hour of retirement, in the repose of the passions, in the absence of temptation, virtue does seem to be her own adequate reward; and very lovely are the fruits she bears in preserving health, credit, and fortune. But on how few will this principle act! and even on them how often will its operation be suspended! And though virtue for her own sake might have captivated a few hearts, which almost seem cast in a natural mould of goodness, yet no motive could, at all times, be so likely to restrain even these, (especially under the pressure of temptation,) as this simple assertion—*For all this, God will bring thee into judgment.*

It is the beauty of our religion, that it is not held out exclusively to a few select spirits; that it is not an object of speculation, or an exercise of ingenuity, but a *rule of life*, suited to every condition, capacity, and temper. It is the glory of the Christian religion

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to *be*, what it was the glory of every ancient philosophic system *not* to be; *the religion of the people*; and that which constitutes its characteristic value, is its suitableness to the genius, condition, and necessities of all mankind.

For with whatsoever obscurities it has pleased God to shadow some parts of his written word, yet he has graciously ordered, that whatever is necessary should be perspicuous also: and though, as to his adorable essence, "clouds and darkness are round about him;" yet these are not the medium through which he has left us to discover our duty. In this, as in all other points, revealed religion has a decided superiority over all the ancient systems of philosophy, which were always in many respects impracticable and extravagant, because not framed from observations drawn from a perfect knowledge "of what was in man." Whereas the whole scheme of the Gospel is accommodated to real human nature; laying open its mortal disease, presenting its only remedy; exhibiting rules of conduct, often difficult, indeed, but never impossible; and where the rule was so high that the practicability seemed desperate, holding out a living pattern, to elucidate the doctrine and to illustriate the precept; offering every where the clearest notions of what we have to hope, and what we have to fear; the strongest injunctions of what we are to believe, and the most explicit directions of what we are to do: with the most encouraging offers of Divine assistance for strengthening our faith and quickening our obedience.

In short, whoever examines the wants of his own heart, and the appropriate assistance which the Gospel furnishes, will find them to be two tallies which exactly correspond—an internal evidence, stronger perhaps than any other, of the truth of revelation.

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This is the religion with which the ingenuous hearts of youth should be warmed, and by which their minds, while pliant, should be directed. This will afford a "lamp to their paths," stronger, steadier, brighter than the feeble and uncertain glimmer of a cold and comfortless philosophy.

CHAP. IV.

Other Symptoms of the Decline of Christianity—No Family-Religion—Corrupt or negligent Example of Superiors—The Self-denying and Evangelical Virtues held in Contempt—Neglect of encouraging and promoting Religion among Servants.

It was by no means the design of the present undertaking to make a general invective on the corrupt state of manners, or even to animadvert on the conduct of the higher ranks, but inasmuch as the corruption of that conduct, and the depravation of those manners, appear to be a natural consequence of the visible decline of religion; and as operating in its turn, as a cause, on the inferior orders of society.

Of the other obvious causes which contribute to this decline of morals, little will be said. Nor is the present a romantic attempt to restore the simplicity of primitive manners. This is too literally an age of gold, to expect that it should be so in the poetical and figurative sense. It would be unjust and absurd not to form our opinions and expectations from the present general state of society. And it would argue great ignorance of the corruption which commerce, and conquest, and riches, and arts necessarily introduce into a state, to look for the same soberminded-ness, simplicity, and purity among the *dregs of Romulus*, as the severe and simple manners of elder Rome presented.

But

But though it would be an attempt of desperate hardihood to controvert that maxim of the witty bard, that

To mend the world's a vast design;

a popular aphorism, by the way, which has done no little mischief, inasmuch, as under the mask of hopelessness it suggests an indolent acquiescence; yet to make the best of the times in which we live; to fill up the measure of our own actual particular, and individual duties; and to take care that the age shall not be the worse for our having been cast into it, seems to be the bare dictate of common probity, and not a romantic flight of impracticable perfection.

Is it then so very chimerical to imagine that the benevolent can be sober-minded? Is it romantic to desire that the good should be consistent? Is it absurd to fancy that what has once been practised should not now be impracticable?

It is impossible not to help regretting that it should be the general temper of many of the leading persons of that age which arrogates to itself the glorious character of the *age of benevolence*, to be kind, considerate, and compassionate, every where rather than at home; that the rich and the fashionable should be zealous in promoting religious as well as charitable institutions abroad, and yet discourage every thing which looks like religion in their own families: that they should be at a considerable expence in instructing the poor at a distance, and yet discredit piety among their own servants—those more immediate objects of every man's attention, whom Providence has enabled to keep any; and for whose conduct he will be finally accountable, inasmuch as he may have helped to corrupt it.

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Is there any degree of pecuniary bounty without doors which can counteract the mischief of a wrong example at home, or atone for that infectious laxity of principle which spreads corruption wherever its influence extends? Is not he the best benefactor to society who sets the best example, and who does not only the most good, but the least evil? Will not that man, however liberal, very imperfectly promote virtue in the world at large, who neglects to disseminate its principles within the immediate sphere of his own personal influence, by a correct conduct and a blameless behaviour? Can a generous but profligate person atone by his purse for the disorders of his life? Can he expect a blessing on his bounties, while he defeats their effect by a profane or even a careless conversation?

In moral as well as in political treatises, it is often asserted that it is a great evil to do no good: but it has not been perhaps enough insisted on, that it is a great good to do no evil. This species of goodness is not ostentatious enough for popular declamation; and the value of this abstinence from vice is perhaps not well understood but by Christians, because it wants the ostensible brilliancy of actual performance.

But as the *principles* of Christianity are in no great repute, so their concomitant *qualities*, the evangelical virtues, are proportionably disesteemed. Let it however be remembered, that those secret habits of self-controul, those interior and unobtrusive virtues, which excite no astonishment, kindle no emulation, and extort no praise, are at the same time the most difficult, and the most sublime; and if Christianity be true, will be the most graciously accepted by *him* who witnesses the secret combat and the silent victory: while the splendid deeds which have the world for their witness, and immortal fame for their reward, shall perhaps cost him who atchieved them

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less than it costs a conscientious Christian to subdue one irregular inclination; a conquest which the world will never know; and, if it did, would probably despise.

Though great actions performed on human motives, are permitted by the supreme Disposer to be equally beneficial to society with such as are performed on purer principles; yet it is an affecting consideration, that, at the final adjustment of accounts, the politician who *raised* a state, or the hero who *preserved* it, may miss of that favour of God which, if it was not his motive, will certainly not be his reward. And it is awful to reflect, as we visit the monuments justly raised by public gratitude, or the statues properly erected by well-earned admiration; it is awful, I say, to reflect on what may now be the unalterable condition of the illustrious object of these deserved but unavailing honours; and that he who has saved a state may have lost his own soul!

A Christian life seems to consist of two things, almost equally difficult; the adoption of good habits, and the excision of such as are evil. No one sets out on a religious course with a stock of native innocence, or actual freedom from sin; for there is no such state in human life. The natural heart is not, as has been too often supposed, a blank paper, whereon the divine spirit has nothing to do but to stamp characters of goodness: no! many blots are to be erased, many defilements are to be cleansed, as well as fresh impressions to be made.

The vigilant Christian, therefore, who acts with an eye to the approbation of his Maker, rather than to that of mankind, to a future account, rather than to present glory, will find that, diligently to cultivate the "unweeded garden" of his own heart; to mend the soil; to clear the ground of its indigenous vices, by practising the painful business of extirpation, will be

be that part of his duty which will cost him most labour, and bring him least credit: while the fair flower of one shewy action, produced with little trouble, and of which the very pleasure is reward enough, shall gain him more praise than the eradication of the rankest weeds which over-run the natural heart.

But the Gospel judges not after the manner of men; for it never fails to make the abstinent virtues a previous step to the right performance of the operative ones; and the relinquishing what is wrong to be a necessary prelude to the performance of what is right. It makes "ceasing to do evil" the indispensable preliminary to "learning to do well." It continually suggests that something is to be laid aside, as well as to be practised. We must "hate "vain thoughts," before we can "love God's law." We must lay aside "malice and hypocrisy," *to enable* us "to receive the engrafted word."—Having "a conscience void of offence;" "abstaining from "fleshly lusts;" "bringing every thought into obe-"dience;"—these are actions, or rather negations, which, though they never will obtain immortality from the chisel of the statuary, the declamation of the historian, or the panegyric of the poet, will however be "had in everlasting remembrance," when the works of the statuary, the historian, and the poet will be no more.

And, for our encouragement, it is observable that a more difficult Christian virtue generally involves an easier one. A habit of self-denial in permitted pleasures, easily induces a victory over such as are unlawful. And to sit loose to our own possessions, necessarily includes an exemption from coveting the possessions of others: and so on of the rest.

Will it be difficult then to trace back to that want of early restraint noticed in the preceding chapter, that licence of behaviour which, having been indulged

ed in youth, afterwards reigns uncontrouled in families; and which having infected education in its first springs, taints all the streams of domestic virtue? And will it be thought strange that that same want of religious principle which corrupted our children, should corrupt our servants.

We scarcely go into any company without hearing some invective against the increased profligacy of this order of men; and the remark is made with as great an air of astonishment, as if the cause of the complaint were not as visible as the truth of it. It would be endless to point out instances in which the increased dissipation of their *betters* (as they are oddly called) has contributed to the growth of this evil. But it comes only within the immediate design of the present undertaking, to insist on the single circumstance of the almost total extermination of religion in fashionable families, as a cause adequate of itself to any consequence which depraved morals can produce.

Is there not a degree of injustice in persons who express strong indignation at those crimes which crowd our prisons, and furnish our incessant executions, and who yet discourage not an internal principle of vice: since those crimes are nothing more than that principle put into action? And it is no less absurd than cruel, in such of the great as lead disorderly lives, to expect to prevent vice by the laws they make to restrain or punish it, while their own example is a perpetual source of temptation to commit it. If, by their own practice, they demonstrate that they think a vicious life is the only happy one, with what colour of justice can they inflict penalties on others, who, by acting on the same principle, expect the same indulgence!

And indeed it is somewhat unreasonable to expect very high degrees of virtue and probity from a class of people

people whose whole life, after they are admitted into dissipated families, is one continued counteraction of the principles in which they have probably been bred.

When a poor youth is transplanted from one of those excellent institutions which do honour to the present age, and give some hope of reforming the next, into the family of his noble benefactor in town, who has, perhaps, provided liberally for his instruction in the country; what must be his astonishment at finding the manner of life to which he is introduced diametrically opposite to that life to which he has been taught that salvation is alone annexed! He has been taught that it was his bounden duty to be devoutly thankful for his own scanty meal, perhaps of barley-bread; yet he sees his noble lord sit down every day

Not to a dinner, but a hecatomb;

to a repast for which every element is plundered, and every climate impoverished; for which nature is ransacked, and art is exhausted; without even the formal ceremony of a slight acknowledgment. It will be lucky for the master, if his servant does not happen to know that even the Pagans never sat down to a repast without making a libation to their deities; and that the Jews did not eat a little fruit, or drink a cup of water, without an expression of devout thankfulness.

Next to the law of God, he has been taught to reverence the law of the land, and to respect an act of parliament next to a text of scripture: yet he sees his honourable protector, publickly in his own house, engaged in the evening in playing at a game expresly prohibited by the laws, and against which perhaps he himself had been assisting in the day to pass an act.

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While the contempt of religion was confined to wits and philosophers, the effect was not so sensibly felt. But we cannot congratulate the ordinary race of mortals on their emancipation from old prejudices, or their indifference to sacred usages; as it is not at all visible that the world is become happier in proportion as it is become more enlightened. We might rejoice more in the boasted diffusion of light and freedom, were it not apparent that bankruptcies are grown more frequent, robberies more common, divorces more numerous, and forgeries more extensive—that more rich men die by their own hand, and more poor men by the hand of the executioner—than when Christianity was practised by the vulgar, and countenanced, at least, by the great.

Is it not to be regretted therefore, while the affluent are encouraging so many admirable scheme, for promoting religion among the children of the poor, that they do not like to *perpetuate* the principle, by encouraging it in their own children and their servants also? Is it not pity, since these last are so moderately furnished with the good things of this life, to rob them of that bright reversion, the bare hope of which is a counterpoise to all the hardships they undergo here—especially since by diminishing this future hope, we shall not be likely to add to their present usefulness?

Still allowing, what has been already granted, that absolute infidelity is not the reigning evil, and that servants will perhaps be more likely to see religion neglected than to hear it ridiculed,—would it not be a meritorious kindness in families of a better stamp, to furnish them with more opportunities of learning and practising their duty? Is it not impolitic indeed, as well as unkind, to refuse them any means of having impressed on their consciences the operative principles of Christianity? It is but little, barely

barely not to *oppose* their going to church, not to prevent their doing their duty at home; their opportunities of doing both ought to be facilitated, by giving them, at certain seasons, as few employments as possible that may interfere with both. Even when religion is by pretty general consent banished from our families at home, that only furnishes a stronger reason why our families should not be banished from religion in the churches.

But if these opportunities are not made easy and convenient to them, their superiors have no right to expect from them a zeal so far transcending their own, as to induce them to surmount difficulties for the sake of duty. Religion is never once represented in scripture as a light attainment; it is never once illustrated by an easy, a quiet, or an indolent allegory. On the contrary, it is exhibited under the active figure of a combat, a race; something expressive of exertion, activity, progress. And yet many are unjust enough to think that this warfare can be fought, though they themselves are perpetually weakening the vigour of the combatant; this race be run, though they are incessantly obstructing the progress of him who runs by some hard and interfering command. That our compassionate Judge who "knoweth whereof we are made, and remembereth that we are but dust," is particularly touched with the feeling of *their* infirmities, can never be doubted; but what portion of forgiveness he will extend to those who lay on their virtue hard burdens "too heavy for them to bear," who shall say?

To keep an immortal being in a state of spiritual darkness, is a positive disobedience to *His* law, who when he bestowed the Bible, no less than when he created the material world, said, *Let there be light.* It were well, both for the advantage of master and

servant, that the latter should have the doctrines of the Gospel frequently impressed on his heart; that his conscience should be made familiar with a system which offers such clear and intelligible propositions of moral duty. The striking interrogation, "how "shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against "God?" will perhaps operate as forcibly on an uncultivated mind, as the most eloquent essay to prove that man is not an accountable being. That once credited promise, that "they who have done "well shall go into everlasting life," will be more grateful to the spirit of a plain man, than that more elegant and disinterested sentiment, that *virtue is its own reward.* That "he that walketh uprightly "walketh surely," is not on the whole a dangerous, or a misleading maxim. And "well done, good "and faithful servant! I will make thee ruler over "many things," though offensive to the liberal spirit of philosophic dignity, is a comfortable support to humble and suffering piety. That "we "should do to others as we would they should do "to us," it is a portable measure of human duty, always at hand, as always referring to something within himself, not amiss for a poor man to carry constantly about with him, who has neither time nor learning to search for a better. It is an universal and compendious law, so universal as to include the whole compass of social obligation; so compendious as to be inclosed in so short and plain an aphorism, that the dullest mind cannot misapprehend, nor the weakest memory forget it. It is convenient for bringing out on all the ordinary occasions of life. We need not say "who shall go up to heaven and "bring it untous, for this word is very nigh unto thee "in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest "do it*."

* Deut. xxx. 11 and 12.

For

For it is a very valuable part of the gospel of Christ, that though it is an entire and perfect system in its design; though it exhibits one great plan, from which complete trains of argument, and connected schemes of reasoning may be deduced; yet in compassion to the multitude, for whom this benevolent institution was in a good measure designed, and who could not have comprehended a long chain of propositions, or have embraced remote deductions, the most important truths of doctrine, and the most essential documents of virtue, are detailed in single maxims, and comprised in short sentences; independent of themselves, yet making a necessary part of a consummate whole; from a few of which principles the whole train of human virtues has been deduced, and many a perfect body of ethics has been framed.

If it be thought wonderful, that from so few letters of the alphabet, so few figures of arithmetic, so few notes in music, such endless combinations should have been produced in their respective arts; how far more beautiful would it be to trace the whole circle of morals thus growing out of a few elementary principles of gospel truth.

All Seneca's arguments against the fear of death never yet reconciled one reader to its approach, half so effectually as the humble believer is reconciled to it by that simple persuasion, " I know that my Re- " deemer liveth."

While the modern philosopher is extending the boundaries of human knowledge, by undertaking to prove that matter is eternal; or enlarging the stock of human happiness, by demonstrating the extinction of spirit,—it can do no harm to an unlettered man to believe, that " heaven and earth shall pass " away, but God's word shall not pass away." While

the former is indulging the profitable enquiry why the Deity made the world so late, or why he made it at all, it will not hurt the latter to believe that " in " the begining God made the world," and that in the end " he shall judge it in righteousness."

While the liberal scholar is usefully studying the law of nature and of nations, let him rejoice that his more illiterate brother possesses the plain conviction that " love is the fulfilling of the law"—that " love " working no ill to his neighbour." And let him be persuaded that he himself, though he know all Tully's offices by heart, may not have acquired a more feeling and operative sentiment than is conveyed to the *common* Christian in the rule to " bear each o- " ther's burthens." While the wit is criticising the creed, he will be no loser by encouraging his dependents to keep the commandments; since a few such simple propositions as the above furnish a more practical and correct rule of life than can be gleaned from all the volumes of ancient philosophy, justly eminent as many of them are for wisdom and purity. For though they abound with passages of true sublimity, and sentiments of great moral beauty, yet the result is naturally defective, the conclusions necessarily contradictory. This was no fault of the author, but of the system. The vision was acute, but the light was dim. The sharpest sagacity could not distinguish spiritual objects, in the twilight of natural religion, with that accuracy with which they are now discerned by every common Christian, in the diffusion of gospel light.

And whether it be that what depraves the principle darkens the intellect also, certain it is that an uneducated serious Christian reads his bible with a clearness of intelligence, with an intellectual comment, which no sceptic or mere worldling ever attains. The

former

ormer has not prejudged the cause he is examining He is not often led by his passions, still more rarely by his interest, to resist his convictions. While " the " secret of the Lord is (obviously) with them that " fear him," the mind of them who fear him *not*, is generally prejudiced by a retaining fee from the world, from their passions or their pride, before they enter on the enquiry.

With what consistency can the covetous man embrace a religion which so pointedly forbids him to lay up " treasures upon earth ?" How will the man of spirit, as the world is pleased to call the duellist relish a religion which allows not " the sun to go " down upon his wrath ?" How can the ambitious struggle for " a kingdom which is not of this world," and embrace a faith which commands him to lay down his crown at the feet of another ? How should the professed wit or the mere philosopher adopt a system which demands in a lofty tone of derision, " Where is the scribe ? Where is the wise ? Where " is the disputer of this world ?" How will the self-satisfied Pharisee endure a religion which, while it peremptorily demands from him every useful action, and every right exertion, will not permit him to rest his hope of salvation on their performance ? He whose affections are voluntarily rivetted to the present world, will not much delight in a scheme whose avowed principle is to set him above it.—The obvious consequence of these " hard sayings" is illustrated by daily instances. " Have any of the rulers believed on " him ?" is a question not confined to the first age of his appearance. Had the most enlightened philosophers of the most polished nations, collected all the scattered wit and learning of the world into one point in order to invent a religion for the salvation of mankind, the doctrine of the cross is perhaps precisely the thing they would never have hit upon; precisely the

the thing which, being offered to them, they would reject. The intellectual pride of the philosopher relished it as little as the carnal pride of the Jew; for it flattered human wit no more than it gratified human grandeur. The pride of great acquirements, and of great wealth, equally obstructs the reception of divine truth into the heart; and whether the natural man be called upon to part either from "great "possessions," or "high imaginations," he equally goes away sorrowing.

CHAP.

CHAP. V

The negligent Conduct of Christians no real Objection against Christianity.—The reason why its Effects are not more manifest to Worldly Men, is, because Believers do not lead Christian Lives.—Professors differ but little in their Practice from Unbelievers.—Even real Christians are too diffident and timid, and afraid of acting up to their Principles.—The Absurdity of the Charge commonly brought against religious People, that they are too strict.

It is an objection frequently brought against Christianity, that if it exhibited so perfect a scheme, if its influences were as strong, if its effects were as powerful, as its friends pretend, it must have produced more visible consequences in the reformation of mankind. This is not the place fully to answer this objection, which (like all the other cavils against our religion) continues to be urged just as if it never *had* been answered.

That vice and immorality prevail in no small degree in countries professing Christianity, we need not go out of our own to be convinced. But that this is the case only because this benign principle is not suffered to operate in its full power, will be no less obvious to all who are sincere in their enquiries: For if we allow (and who that examines impartially can help allowing?) that it is the natural tendency of Christianity to make men better, then it must be the aversion

aversion from receiving it, and not the fault of the principle, which prevents them from becoming so.

Those who are acquainted with the effects which Christianity actually produced in the first ages of the church, when it *was* received in its genuine purity, and when it *did* operate without obstruction, from its professors at least, will want no other proof of its inherent power and efficacy. At that period, its most decided and industrious enemy, the emperor Julian, could recommend the *manners* of the Galileans to the imitation of his pagan high priest; though he himself, at the same time, was doing every thing which the most inveterate malice, sharpened by the acutest wit, and backed by the most absolute power, could devise, to discredit their doctrines.

Nor would the efficacy of Christianity be less visible now in influencing the conduct of its professors, if its principles were heartily and sincerely received. They would, were they of the true genuine cast, operate on the conduct so effectually, that we should see morals and manners growing out of principles, as we see other consequences grow out of their proper and natural causes. Let but this great spring have its unobstructed play, and there would be little occasion to declaim against this excess, or that enormity. If the same skill and care which are employed in curing symptoms, were vigorously levelled at the internal principle of the disease, the moral health would feel the benefit. If that attention which is bestowed in lopping the redundant and unsightly branches, were devoted to the cultivation of a sound and uncorrupt root, the effect of this labour would soon be discovered by the excellence of the fruits.

For though, even in the highest possible exertion of religious principle, and the most diligent practice of all its consequential train of virtues, man would still find evil propensities enough, in his fallen nature, to make

make it necessary that he should counteract them, by keeping alive his diligence after higher attainments, and to quicken his aspirations after a better state; yet the prevailing temper would be in general right, the will would be in a great measure rectified; and the heart, feeling and acknowledging its disease, would apply itself diligently to the only remedy. Thus though even the best men have infirmities enough to deplore, commit sins enough to keep them deeply humble, and feel more sensibly than others the imperfections of that vessel in which their heavenly treasure is hid, they however have the internal consolation of knowing that they shall have to do with a merciful Father, who "despiseth not the sighing of the "contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrow-"ful;" who has been witness to all their struggles against sin, and to whom they can appeal with Peter for the sincerity of their desires—"Lord! Thou "knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love "Thee."

All the heavy charges which have been brought against religion, have been taken from the abuses of it. In every other instance, the injustice of this proceeding would be notorious: but there is a general want of candour in the judgment of men on this subject, which we do not find them exercise on other occasions; that of throwing the fault of the erring or ignorant professor on the profession itself.

It does not derogate from the honourable profession of arms, that there are cowards and braggarts in the army. If any man lose his estate by the chicanery of an attorney, or his health by the blunder of a physician, it is commonly said that the one was a disgrace to his business, and the other was ignorant of it; but no one therefore concludes that law and physic are contemptible professions.

Christianity alone is obliged to bear all the obloquy incurred by the misconduct of its followers; to sustain

tain all the reproach excited by ignorant, by fanatical, by superstitious, or hypocritical professors. But whoever accuses it of a tendency to produce the errors of these professors, must have picked up his opinion any where rather than in the New Testament; which Book being the only authentic history of Christianity, is that which candour would naturally consult for information.

But as worldly and irreligious men do not draw their notions from that pure fountain, but from the polluted stream of human practice; as they form their judgment of divine truth from the conduct of those who pretend to be enlightened by it; some charitable allowance *must* be made for the contempt which they entertain of Christianity, when they see what poor effects it produces in the lives of the generality of professing Christians. What do they observe there which can lead them to entertain very high ideas of the principles which give birth to such practices?

Do men of the world discover any marked, any decided difference between the conduct of nominal christians and that of the rest of their neighbours, who pretend to no religion at all? Do they see, in the daily lives of such, any great abundance of those fruits by which they have heard believers are to be known? On the contrary, do they not discern in them the same anxious and unwearied pursuit after the things of earth, as in those who do not profess to have any thought of heaven? Do not they see them labour as sedulously in the interests of a debasing and frivolous dissipation, as those who do not pretend to have any nobler object in view? Is there not the same eagerness to plunge into all sorts of follies themselves, and the same unrighteous speed in introducing their children to them, as if they had never entered into a solemn engagement to renounce them? Is there not the

the same self-indulgence, the same luxury, and the same passionate attachment to the things of this world in *them*, as is visible in those who do not look for another?

Do not thoughtless neglect, and habitual dissipation answer, as to society, all the ends of the most decided infidelity? Between the barely decent and the openly profane there is indeed this difference,—That the one, by making no profession, deceives neither the world nor his own heart; while the other, by intrenching himself in forms, fancies that he does something, and thanks God that "he is not like this pub-"lican." The one only shuts his eyes upon the danger which the other despises.

But these unfruitful professors would do well to recollect that, by a conduct so little worthy of their high calling, they not only violate the law to which they have vowed obedience, but occasion many to disbelieve or to despise it; that they are thus in a great measure accountable for the infidelity of others, and of course will have to answer for more than their own personal offences: For did they in any respect live up to the principles they profess; did they adorn the doctrines of Christianity by a life in any degree consonant to their faith; did they exhibit any thing of the "beauty of holiness" in their daily conversation; they would then give such a demonstrative proof, not only of the sincerity of their own obedience, but of the brightness of that divine light by which they profess to walk, that the most determined unbeliever would at last begin to think there must be *something* in a religion of which the effects were so visible, and the fruits so amiable; and might in time be led to "glorify," not *them*, not the imperfect doers of these works, but "their Father which is in "heaven." Whereas, as things are at present carried on, the obvious conclusion must be, either that Christians

Christians do not believe in the religion they profess, or that there is no truth in the religion itself.

For will he not naturally say, that if its influences were so predominant, its consequences must be more evident? that, if the prize held out were really so bright, those who truly believed so, would surely *do* something, and *sacrifice* something to obtain it?

This effect of the careless conduct of believers on the hearts of others, will probably be a heavy aggravation of their own guilt at the final reckoning:—and there is no negligent Christian can guess where the infection of his example may stop; or how remotely it may be pleaded as a palliation of the sins of others, who either may think themselves safe while they are only doing what Christians allow themselves to do; or who may adduce a Christian's habitual violation of the divine law, as a presumptive evidence that there is no truth in Christianity.

This swells the amount of the actual mischief beyond calculation; and there is something terrible in the idea of this sort of indefinite evil, that the careless Christian can never know the extent of the contagion he spreads, nor the multiplied infection which *they* may communicate in *their* turn, whom *his* disorders first corrupted.

And there is this farther aggravation of his offence, that he will not only be answerable for all the positive evil of which his example is the cause; but for the omission of all the probable good which might have been called forth in others, had *his* actions been consistent with his profession. What a strong, what an almost irresistble conviction would it carry to the hearts of unbelievers, if they beheld that characteristic difference in the manners of Christians, which their profession gives one a right to expect, if they saw that disinterestedness, that humility, sober-mindedness,

edness, temperance, simplicity, and sincerity, which are the unavoidable fruits of a genuine faith! and which the Bible has taught them to expect in every Christian.

But, while a man talks like a saint, and yet lives like a sinner; while he professes to believe like an apostle, and yet leads the life of a sensualist; talks of an ardent faith, and yet exhibits a cold and low practice; boasts himself the disciple of a meek Master, and yet is as much a slave to his passions as they who acknowledge no such authority; while he appears the proud professor of an humble religion, or the intemperate champion of a self-denying one, —such a man brings Christianity into disrepute, confirms those in error who might have been awakened to conviction, strengthens doubt into disbelief, and hardens indifference into contempt.

Even among those of a better cast and a purer principle, the excessive restraints of timidity, caution, and that "fear of man, which bringeth a "snare," confine, and almost stifle the generous spirit of an ardent exertion in the cause of religion. Christianity may pathetically expostulate, that it is not always "an open enemy which dishonours her," but her "familiar friend." And, "what dost thou "more than others?" is a question which even the good and worthy should often ask themselves, in order to quicken their zeal; to prevent the total stagnation of unexerted principles, on the one hand; or the danger, on the other, of their being driven down the gulph of ruin by the unresisted and confluent tides of temptation, fashion, and example.

In a very strict and mortified age, of which a scrupulous severity was the predominant character, precautions against an excessive zeal might, and doubtless would, be a wholesome and prudent measure.

sure. But in these times of relaxed principle and frigid indifference, to see people so vigilantly on their guard against the imaginary mischiefs of enthusiasm, while they run headlong into the real opposite perils of a destructive licentiousness, reminds us of the one-eyed animal in the fable; who, living on the banks of the ocean, never fancied he could be destroyed any way but by drowning: but, while he kept that one eye constantly fixed on the sea, on which side he concluded all the peril lay, he was devoured by an enemy on the dry land, from which quarter he never suspected any danger.

Are not the mischiefs of an enthusiastic piety insisted on with as much earnestness as if an extravagant devotion were the prevailing propensity? Is not the necessity of moderation as vehemently urged as if an intemperate zeal were the epidemic distemper of the great world? as if all our apparent danger and natural bias lay on the side of a too rigid austerity, which required the discreet and constant counteraction of an opposite principle? Would not a stranger be almost tempted to imagine, from the frequent invectives against extreme strictness, that abstraction from the world, and a monastic rage for retreat, were the ruling temper? that we were in some danger of seeing our places of diversion abandoned, and the enthusiastic scenes of the *Holy Fathers of the desert* acted over again by the frantic and uncontroulable devotion of our young persons of fashion?

It is not to be denied, that enthusiasm is an evil to which the more religious of the lower class are peculiarly exposed; and this from a variety of causes, upon which this is not the place to enlarge. But who will be hardy enough to assert that the class we are now addressing, commonly fall into the same error. In order to establish, or to overthrow this assertion,

assertion, let each fashionable reader confess whether, within the sphere of his own observation, the fact be realized. Let each bring this vague charge specifically home to his own acquaintance. Let him honestly declare what proportion of noble enthusiasts, what number of honourable fanatics his own personal knowledge of the great world supplies. Let him compare the list of his enthusiastic with that of his luxurious friends, of his fanatical with his irreligious acquaintance, of "the righteous over "much" with such as "care for none of these "things;" of the strict and precise with that of the loose and irregular, of those who beggar themselves by their pious alms with those who injure their fortune by extravagance; of those who "are lovers "of God" with those who are lovers of pleasure. Let him declare whether he sees more of his associates swallowed up in gloomy meditation or immersed in sensuality; whether more are the slaves of superstitious observances or of ambition.—Surely those who address the rich and great in the way of exhortation and reproof, would do particularly well to define exactly what is indeed the prevailing character; lest, for want of such discrimination they should heighten the disease they might wish to cure, and increase the bias they would desire to counteract, by addressing to the voluptuary cautions which belong to the hermit, and thus aggravate his already inflamed appetites by invectives against an evil of which he is in little danger.

If, however, superstition, where it really does exit, injures religion, and we grant that it greatly injures it, yet we insist that scepticism injures it no less; for to deride, or to omit any of the component parts of Christian faith, is surely not a less fatal evil than making uncommanded additions to it.

It

It is seriously to be regretted in an age like the present, remarkable for indifference in religion and levity in manners, and which stands so much in need of lively patterns of firm and resolute piety, that many who really are Christians on the soberest conviction, should not appear more openly and decidedly on the side they have espoused; that they assimilate so very much with the manners of those about them (which manners they yet scruple not to disapprove); and, instead of an avowed but prudent stedfastness, which might draw over the others, appear evidently fearful of being thought precise and over-scrupulous; and actually seem to disavow their right principles, by concessions and accommodations not strictly consistent with them. They often seem cautiously afraid of *doing too much*, and *going too far*; and the dangerous plea, the necessity of *living like other people*, of *being like the rest of the world*, and the propriety of *not being particular*, is brought as a reasonable apology for a too yielding and indiscriminate conformity.

But, at a time when almost all are sinking into the prevailing corruption, how beautiful a rare, a single integrity is, let the instances of Lot and Noah declare! And to those with whom a poem is an higher authority than the Bible, let me recommend the most animated picture of a righteous singularity that ever was delineated, in

——The Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he
Among innumerable false unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love and zeal:
Nor NUMBERS, nor EXAMPLE with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Tho' SINGLE. PAR. LOST. B. iv.

Few

Few indeed of the more orderly and decent have any objection to that degree of religion which is compatible with their general acceptance with others, or the full enjoyment of their own pleasures. For a formal and ceremonious exercise of the outward duties of Christianity may not only be kept up without exciting censure, but will even procure a certain respect and confidence; and it not quite irreconcileable with a voluptuous and dissipated life. So far many go; and so far as "godliness is profitable to "the life that *is*," it passes without reproach.

But as soon as men begin to consider religious exercises not as a decency, but a duty; not a commutation for a self-denying life, but as a means to promote a holy temper and a virtuous conduct; as soon as they feel disposed to carry the effect of their devotion into their daily life; as soon as their principles discover themselves, by leading them to withdraw from those scenes, and abstain from those actions in which the gay place their supreme happiness; as soon as something is to be *done*, and something is to be *parted with*, then the world begins to take offence, and to stigmatize the *activity* of that piety which had been commended as long as it remained *inoperative*, and had only evaporated in *words*.

When religion, like the vital principle, takes its seat in the heart, and sends out supplies of life and heat to every part: diffuses motion, soul and vigour, through the whole circulation, and informs and animates the whole man; when it operates on the practice, influences the conversation, breaks out into a lively zeal for the honour of God, and the best interests of mankind, then the sincerity of heart or the sanity of mind, of that person will become questionable; and it must be owing to a very fortunate combination of circumstances indeed, if he can at once preserve the character of parts and piety, and retain the

reputation of a man of sense after he has acquired that of a Christian.

It is surely a folly to talk of being too holy, too strict, or too good. Where there really happens to appear some foundation for the charge of enthusiasm, (as there are indeed sometimes in good people eccentricities which justify the censure,) we may depend upon it, that it proceeds from some defect in the judgment, and not from any excess in the piety: for in goodness there is no excess: and it is as preposterous to say that any one is too good, or too pious, as that he is too wise, too strong, or too healthy; since the highest point in all these is only the perfection of that quality which we admired in a lower degree. There may be an *imprudent*, but there cannot be a *superabundant* goodness. An ardent imagination may mislead a rightly turned heart; and a weak intellect may incline the best intentioned to ascribe too much value to things of comparatively small importance. Such a one not having discernment enough to perceive where the force and stress of duty lie, may inadvertently discredit religion by a too scrupulous exactness in points of small intrinsic value. And even well-meaning men as well as hypocrites may think they have done a meritorious service when their "mint" and "anise" are rigorously tithed.

But in observing the "weightier matters of the "law," in the practice of universal holiness, in the love of God, there can be no possibility of exceeding, while there is no limitation in the command. We are in no danger of loving our neighbour *better* than ourselves; and let us remember that we do not go beyond, but fall short of our duty, while we love him *less*. If we were commanded to love God with *some* of our heart, with *part* of our soul, and a *portion* of our strength, there would then be some colour for those perpetual cavils about the *proportion* of love and

and the *degree* of obedience which are due to him. But as the command is so definite, so absolute, so comprehensive, so entire, nothing can be more absurd than that unmeaning, but not unfrequent charge, brought against religious persons, that *they are too strict.* It is in effect saying, that they love God too much, and serve him too well.

The foundation of this silly censure is commonly laid in the first principles of education, where an early separation is systematically made between duty and pleasure. One of the first baits held out for the encouragement of children is, that when they have done their *duty*, they will be entitled to some *pleasure;* thus forcibly disjoining what should be considered as inseparable. And there is not a more common justification of that idle and dissipated manner in which the second half of the Sunday is commonly spent even by those who make a conscience of spending the former part properly, than that, "now they have done their duty, they may take "their pleasure."

But while Christian observances are considered as tasks, which are to be got over to entitle us to something more pleasant; as a burthen which we must endure in order to propitiate an inexorable Judge, who makes a hard bargain with his creatures, and allows them just so much amusement in pay for so much drudgery,—we must not wonder that such low views are entertained of Christianity, and that a religious life is reprobated as strict and rigid.

But to him who acts from the nobler motive of love, and the animating power of the Christian hope, the exercise is the reward, the permission is the privilege, the work is the wages. *He* does not carve out some miserable pleasure, and stipulate for some meagre diversion, to pay himself for the hard performance of his duty, who in that very performance

experiences the highest pleasure; and feels the truest gratification of which his nature is capable, in devoting the noblest part of that nature to *His* service, to whom he owes all, because from Him he has received all.

This reprobated strictness, therefore, so far from being the source of discomfort and misery, as is pretended, is in reality the true cause of actual enjoyment, by laying the axe to the root of all those turbulent and uneasy passions, the unreserved and yet imperfect gratification of which does so much more tend to disturb our happiness, than that self-government which Christianity enjoins.

But all precepts seem rigorous, all observances are really hard, where there is not an entire conviction of God's right to our obedience, and an internal principle of faith and love to make that obedience pleasant. A religious life is indeed a hard bondage to one immersed in the practices of the world, and under the dominion of its appetites and passions.—To a real Christian, it is "perfect freedom."—He does not now abstain from such and such things merely because they are forbidden, (as he did in the first stages of his progress,) but because his soul has no longer any pleasure in them. And it would be the severest of all punishments to oblige him to return to those practices, from which he once abstained with difficulty, and through the less noble principle of fear.

There is not therefore perhaps a greater mistake than that common notion entertained by the more orderly part of the fashionable world, that a little religion will make people happy, but that an high degree of it is incompatible with all enjoyment.—For surely *that* religion can add little to a man's happiness which restrains him from the commission of a wrong action, but which does not pretend to extinguish

guish the bad principle from which the act proceeded. A religion which ties the hands, without changing the heart; which, like the hell of Tantalus, subdues not the desire, yet forbids the gratification, is indeed an uncomfortable religion: and such a religion, though it may gain a man something on the side of reputation, will give him but little inward comfort. For what true peace can that heart enjoy which is left a prey to that temper which produced the evil, even though terror or shame may have prevented the outward act.

That people devoted to the pursuits of a dissipated life should conceive of religion as a difficult and even unattainable state, it is easy to believe. That they should conceive of it as an unhappy state, is the consummation of their error and their ignorance: for that a *rational* being should have his understanding enlightened; that an *immortal* being should have his views extended and enlarged; that a *helpless* being should have a consciousness of assistance, a *sinful* being the prospect of pardon, or a *fallen* one the assurance of restoration, does not seem a probable ground of unhappiness: and on any other subject but religion such reasoning would not be admissible.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A Stranger, from observing the fashionable Mode of Life, would not take this to be a Christian Country: —Lives of Professing Christians examined, by a Comparison with the Gospel.—Christianity not made the Rule of Life, even by those who profess to receive it as an Object of Faith.—Temporizing Writers contribute to lower the Credit of Christianity.—Loose Harangues on Morals not calculated to reform the Heart.

THE Christian religion is not intended, as some of its fashionable professors seem to fancy, to operate as a charm, a talisman, or incantation, and to produce its effect by our pronouncing certain mystical words, attending at certain consecrated places, and performing certain hallowed ceremonies; but it is an active, vital, influential principle, operating on the heart, restraining the desires, affecting the general conduct, and as much regulating our commerce with the world, our business, pleasures, and enjoyments, our conversations, designs, and actions, as our behaviour in public worship, or even in private devotion.

That the effects of such a principle are strikingly visible in the lives and manners of the generality of those who give the law to fashion, will not perhaps be insisted on. And indeed the whole present system of fashionable life is utterly destructive of seriousness.

To

To instance only in the growing habit of frequenting great assemblies, which is generally thought insignificant, and is in effect so vapid, that one almost wonders how it can be dangerous;—it would excite laughter, because we are so broken into the habit, were I to insist on the immorality of passing one's whole life in a crowd.—But those promiscuous myriads which compose the society, falsely so called, of the gay world; who are brought together without esteem, remain without pleasure, and part without regret; who live in a round of diversions, the possession of which is so joyless, though the absence is so insupportable; these, by the mere force of incessant and indiscriminate association, weaken, and in time wear out, the best feelings and affections of the human heart. And the mere spirit of dissipation, thus contracted from invariable habit, even detached from all its concomitant evils, is in itself as hostile to a religious spirit as more positive and actual offences. Far be it from me to say that it is as criminal; I only insist that it is as opposite to that heavenly-mindedness which is the essence of the Christian temper.

Let us suppose an ignorant and unprejudiced spectator, who should have been taught the theory of all the religions on the globe, brought hither from the other hemisphere. Set him down in the politest part of our capital, and let him determine, if he can, except from what he shall see interwoven in the texture of our laws, and kept up in the service of our churches, to what particular religion we belong. Let him not mix entirely with the most flagitious, but only with the most fashionable; at least, let him keep what they themselves call *the best company*. Let him scrutinize into the manners, customs, conversations, habits, and diversions, most in vogue, and then infer from all he has seen and heard, what is the established religion of the land.

That

That it could not be the Jewish he would soon discover; for of rites, ceremonies, and external observances, he would trace but slender remains. He would be equally convinced that it could not be the religion of Old Greece and Rome; for that enjoined reverence to the gods, and inculcated obedience to the laws. His most probable conclusion would be in favour of the Mahometan faith, did not the excessive indulgence of some of the most distinguished, in an article of intemperance prohibited even by the sensual Prophet of Arabia, defeat that conjecture.

How would the petrified inquirer be astonished, if he were told that all these gay, thoughtless, luxurious, dissipated persons, professed a religion meek, spiritual, self-denying: of which humility, poverty of spirit, a renewed mind, and non-conformity to the world, were specific distinctions!

When he saw the sons of men of fortune, scarcely old enough to be sent to school, admitted to be spectators of the turbulent and unnatural diversion of racing and gaming; and the almost infant-daughters, even of wise and virtuous mothers (an innovation which fashion herself forbade till now) carried with most unthrifty anticipation to the frequent and late protracted ball,—would he believe that we were of a religion which has required from these very parents, a solemn vow that these children should be bred up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" That they should constantly "believe God's "holy word, and keep his commandments?"

When he observed the turmoils of ambition, the competitions of vanity, the ardent thirst for the possession of wealth, and the wild misapplication of it when possessed; how could he persuade himself that all these anxious pursuers of present enjoyment were the disciples of a master who exhibited the very

very character and essence of his religion, as it were in a motto—" MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS " WORLD?"

When he beheld those nocturnal clubs, so subversive of private virtue and domestic happiness, would he conceive that we were of a religion which in express terms " exhorts young men to be sober-minded-" ed?"

When he saw those magnificent and brightly illuminated structures which decorate and disgrace the very precincts of the royal residence (so free itself from all these pollutions); when he beheld the nightly offerings made to the demon of play, on whose cruel altar the fortune and happiness of wives and children are offered up without remorse; would he not conclude that we were of some of those barbarous religions which enjoin unnatural sacrifices, and whose horrid deities are appeased with nothing less than human victims?

Now ought we not to pardon our imaginary spectator, if he should not at once conclude that all the various descriptions of persons above noticed professed the Christian religion; supposing him to have no other way of determining but by the conformity of their manners to that rule by which he had undertaken to judge them? We indeed ourselves must judge with a certain latitude, and candidly take the present state of society into the account: which, in some few instances perhaps, must be allowed to dispense with that literal strictness, which more peculiarly belonged to the first ages of the Gospel.

But as this is really a Christian country, professing to enjoy the purest faith in the purest form, it cannot be unreasonable to go a little farther, and inquire whether Christianity, however firmly established, and generally professed in it, is really practised by that order of fashionable persons, who, while they

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are absorbed in the delights of the world, and their whole souls devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, yet still arrogate to themselves the honourable name of Christians, and occasionally testify their claim to this high character, by a general profession of their belief in, and a decent occasional compliance with the forms of religion, and the ordinances of our church?

This inquiry must be made, not by a comparison with the state of Christianity in other countries; (a mode always fallacious, whether adopted by nations or individuals, is that of comparing themselves with those who are still worse); nor must it be made from any notions drawn from custom, decency, or any other human standard; but from a scripture view of what real religion is;—from any one of those striking and comprehensive representations of it, which may be found condensed in so many single passages of the sacred writings.

Whoever then looks into the book of God, and observes its prevailing spirit, and then looks into that part of the world under consideration, will not surely be thought very censorious, if he pronounce that the conformity between them does not seem to be *very* striking; and that the manners of the one do not very evidently appear to be dictated by the spirit of the other. Will he discover that the Christian religion is so much as pretended to be made the *rule of life* even by that decent order who profess not to have discarded it as an object of faith? Do even the more regular, who neglect not public observances, consider Christianity as *the measure of their actions?* Do even what the world calls religious persons employ their time, their abilities, and their fortune, as talents for which they however confess they believe themselves accountable; or do they in any respect live, I will not say up to their profession (for what human being does so?) but in any consistency with it,

it, or even with an eye to its predominant tendencies? Do persons in general of this description seem to consider the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel as any thing more than a form of words, necessary indeed to be repeated, and proper to be believed? But do they consider them as necessary to be adopted into a governing principle of action?

Is it acting a consistent part to declare in the solemn assemblies that they are "miserable offenders," and that "there is no health in them," and yet never in their daily lives to discover any symptom of that humility and self-abasement, which should naturally be implied in such a declaration?

Is it reasonable or compatible, I will not say with piety, but with good sense, earnestly to lament having "followed the devices and desires of their own "hearts," and then deliberately to plunge into such a torrent of dissipations as clearly indicates that they do not struggle to oppose *one* of these devices, to resist *one* of these desires? I dare not say this is hypocrisy, I do not belive it is, but surely it is inconsistency.

"Be ye not conformed to this world," is a leading principle in the book they acknowledge as their guide. But after unresistingly assenting to this as a doctrinal truth, at church,—how absurd would they think any one who should expect them to adopt it into their practice! Perhaps the whole law of God does not exhibit a single precept more expressly, more steadily, and more uniformly rejected by the class in question. If it mean any thing, it can hardly be consistent with that mode of life emphatically distinguished by the appellation of *fashionable*.

Now, would it be much more absurd (for any other reason but because it is not the custom) if our legislators were to meet one day in every week, gravely to read over all the obsolete statutes and rescinded acts

acts of parliament, than it is for the order of persons of the above description to assemble every Sunday, to profess their belief in and submission to a system of principles, which they do not so much as *intend* shall be binding on their practice?

But to continue our inquiry.—There is not a more common or more intelligible definition of human duty, than that of "Fear God, and keep his command-"ments." Now, as to the first of these inseparable precepts, can we, with the utmost stretch of charity, be very forward to conclude that God is really "very greatly feared," in secret, by those who give too manifest indications that they live "without him "in the world?" And as to the latter precept, which naturally grows out of the other—without noticing any of the flagrant breaches of the moral law, let us only confine ourselves to the allowed, general, and notorious violation of the third and fourth commandments, by the higher as well as by the lower orders; breaches so flagrant, that they force themselves on the observation of the most inattentive, too palpably to be either unnoticed or palliated.

Shall we have reason to change our opinion if we take that divine representation of the sum and substance of religion, and apply it as a touchstone in the present trial,—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God "with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy mind, and with "*all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength, and thy "neighbour as thyself?" Now, judging by inference, do we see many public proofs of that heavenly-mindedness which would be the inevitable effect of such a fervent and animated dedication of all the powers, faculties, and affections of the soul to him who gave it? And, as to the great rule of social duty expressed in the second clause, do we observe as much of that considerate kindness, that pure disinterestedness, that conscientious attention to the comfort

fort of others, especially of dependents and inferiors, as might be expected from those who enjoy the privilege of so unerring a standard of conduct? a standard which, if impartially consulted, must make our kindness to others bear an exact proportion to our self-love: a rule in which Christian principle, operating on human sensibility, could not fail to decide aright in every supposable case. For no man can doubt how he ought to act towards another, while the inward corresponding suggestions of conscience and feeling concur in letting him know how he would wish, in a change of circumstances, that others should act towards him.

Or suppose we take a more detailed survey, by a third rule, which indeed is not so much the principle as the effect of piety—"True religion, and undefiled "before God and the Father, is this: to visit the "fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to "keep himself *unspotted from the world.*" Now, if Christianity insists that obedience to the latter injunction be the true evidence of the sincerity of those who fulfil the former, is the beneficence of the fashionable world *very* strikingly illustrated by this spotless purity, this exemption from the pollutions of the world, which is here declared to be its invariable concomitant?

But if I were to venture to take my estimate with a view more immediately evangelical; if I presumed to look for that genuine Christianity which consists in "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord "Jesus Christ;" to insist that, whatever *natural* religion and *fashionable* religion may teach, it is the peculiarity of the *Christian* religion to humble the sinner and exalt the Saviour; to insist that not only the grossly flagitious, but that *all* have sinned; that *all* are by nature in a state of condemnation; that *all* stand in need of mercy, of which there is no hope but

but on the Gospel terms; that eternal life is promised to those *only* who accept it on the offered conditions of "faith, repentance, and renewed obedience;"—if I were to insist on such evidences of our Christianity as these; if I were to express these doctrines in plain scriptural terms, without lowering, qualifying, disguising, or doing them away; if I were to insist on this belief, and its implied and corresponding practices; I am aware that, with whatever condescending patience this little tract might have been so far perused, many a fashionable reader would here throw it aside, as having now detected the palpable enthusiast, the abetter of "strange doctrines," long ago consigned over by the liberal and the polite to bigots and fanatics. And yet, if the Bible be true, this is a simple and faithful description of Christianity.

Surely men forget that we are urging them upon their own principles; that while we are pressing them with motives drawn from Christianity, they seem to have as little concern in those motives as if they themselves were of another religion. It is not a name that will stand us in stead. It is not merely glorying in the title of Christians, while we are living in the neglect of its precepts; it is not valuing ourselves on the profession of religion as creditable, while we reject the power of it as fanatical that will save us. In any other circumstance of life it would be accounted absurd to have a set of propositions, principles, statutes, or fundamental articles, and not to make them the ground of our acting as well as of our reasoning. In these supposed instances the blame would lie in the contradiction; in religion it lies in the agreement. Strange! that to act in consequence of received and acknowledged principles, should be accounted weakness! Strange, that what alone is truly consistent, should be branded as absurd! Strange, that men must really forbear

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to act rationally, only that they may not be reckoned mad! Strange, that they should be commended for having prayed in the excellent words of the Bible and of our church, for "a clean heart, and "a right spirit;" and yet, if they gave any sign of such a transformation of heart, they should be accounted, if not fanatical, at least, singular, weak, or melancholy men.

After having however, just ventured to hint at what are indeed the humbling doctrines of the gospel, the doctrines to which alone eternal life is promised, I shall in deep humility forbear to enlarge on this part of the subject, which has been exhausted by the labours of wise and pious men in all ages. Unhappily however, the most awakening of these writers are not the favourite guests in the closets of the more fashionable Christians; who, when they happen to be more seriously disposed than ordinary, are fond of finding out some middle kind of reading, which recommends some half-way state, something between Paganism and Christianity, suspending the mind, like the position of Mahomet's tomb, between earth and heaven:—a kind of reading which, while it quiets the conscience by being on the side of morals, neither awakens fear, nor alarms security. By dealing in generals, it comes home to the hearts of none: it flatters the passions of the reader, by ascribing high merit to the performance of certain right actions, and the forbearance from certain wrong ones; among which, that reader must be very unlucky indeed who does not find some performances and some forbearances of his own. It at once enables him to keep heaven in his eye, and the world in his heart. It agreeably represents the readers to themselves as amiable persons, guilty indeed of a few faults, but never as condemned sinners under sentence

sentence of death. It commonly abounds with high encomiums on the dignity of human nature; the good effects of virtue on health, fortune, and reputation; the dangers of a blind zeal, the mischiefs of enthusiasm, and the folly of singularity, with various other kindred sentiments; which, if they do not fall in of themselves with the corruptions of our nature, may, by a little warping, be easily accommodated to them.

These are the too successful practices of certain lukewarm and temporizing divines, who have become popular by blunting the edge of that heavenly tempered weapon, whose salutary keenness, but for their "deceitful handling," would oftener "pierce "to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

But those severer preachers of righteousness, who disgust by applying too closely to the conscience;—who probe the inmost heart, and lay open all its latent peccancies; who treat of principles as the only certain source of manners; who lay the axe to the root, oftener that the pruning knife to the branch; who insist much and often on the great leading truths, that man is a fallen creature, who must be restored, if he be restored at all, by means very little flattering to human pride; such heart-searching writers as these will seldom find access to the houses and hearts of the more modish Christians, unless they happen to owe their admission to some subordinate quality of style; unless they can captivate, with the seducing graces of language, those well-bred readers, who are childishly amusing themselves with the garnish, when they are perishing for want of food; who are searching for polished periods when they should be in quest of alarming truths; who are looking for elegance of composition when they should be anxious for eternal life.

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Whatever comparative praise may be due to the former class of writers, when viewed with others of a less decent order, yet I am not sure whether so many books of frigid morality, exhibiting such inferior motives of action, such moderate representations of duty, and such a low standard of principle, have not done religion much more harm than good; whether they do not lead many a reader to inquire what is the lowest degree in the scale of virtue with which he may content himself, so as barely to escape eternal punishment; how much indulgence he may allow himself, without absolutely forfeiting his chance of safety: what is the uttermost verge to which he may venture of this world's enjoyment, and yet just keep within a possibility of hope for the next: adjusting the scales of indulgence and security with such a scrupulous equilibrium, as not to lose much pleasure, yet not incur much penalty.

This is hardly an exaggerated representation: and to these low views of duty is partly owing so much of that bare-weight virtue with which even Christians are so apt to content themselves: fighting for every inch of ground which may possibly be taken within the pales of permission, and stretching those pales to the utmost edge of that limitation about which the world and the Bible contend.

But while the nominal Christian is persuading himself that there can be no harm, in going *a little farther*, the real Christian is always afraid of going too far. While the one is debating for a little more disputed ground, the other is so fearful of straying into the regions of unallowed indulgence, that he keeps at a prudent distance from the extremity of his permitted limits; and is as anxious in restricting as the other is desirous of extending them. One thing is clear, and it may be no bad indication by which to discover the state of a man's heart to himself;

self.; while he is contending for this allowance, and stipulating for the other indulgence, it will shew him that, whatever change there may be in his life, there is none in his heart; the temper remains as it did; and it is by the inward frame rather than the outward act that he can best judge of his *own* state, whatever may be the rule by which he undertakes to judge of that of another.

It is less wonderful that there are not more Christians, than that Christians, as they are called, are not better men; for if Christianity be not true, the motives to virtue are not high enough to quicken ordinary men to very extraordinary exertions. We see them do and suffer every day for popularity, for custom, for fashion, for the point of honour, not only more than good men do and suffer for religion, but a great deal more than religion, requires them to do. For her *reasonable service* demands no sacrifices but what are sanctioned by good sense, sound policy, right reason, and uncorrupt judgment.

Many of these fashionable professors even go so far as to bring their right faith as an apology for their wrong practice. They have a commodious way of intrenching themselves within the shelter of some general position of unquestionable truth: Even the great Christian hope become a snare to them. They apologize for a life of offence, by taking refuge in the supreme goodness they are abusing. That "God "is all merciful," is the common reply to those who hint to them their danger. This is a false and fatal application of a divine and comfortable truth. Nothing can be more certain than the proposition, nor more delusive than the inference: for their deduction implies, not that he is merciful to sin repented of, but to sin continued in. But it is a most fallacious hope to expect that God will violate his own covenant,

nant, or that he is indeed, " all mercy," to the utter exclusion of his other attributes of perfect holiness, purity, and justice.

It is a dangerous folly to rest on these vague and general notions of indefinite mercy; and nothing can be more delusive than this indefinite trust in being forgiven in our *own* way, after God has clearly revealed to us that he will only forgive us in *his* way. Besides, is there not something singularly base in sinning against God *because* he is merciful?

But the truth is, no one does truly trust in God, who does not endeavour to obey him. For to break his laws, and yet to depend on his favour; to live in opposition to his will, and yet in expectation of his mercy; to violate his commands, and yet look for his acceptance, would not, in any other instance, be thought a reasonable ground of conduct; and yet it is by no means as uncommon as it is inconsistent.

CHAP. VII.

View of those who acknowledge Christianity as a perfect System of Morals, but deny its Divine Authority.—Morality not the Whole of Religion.

As in the preceding chapter notice was taken of that description of persons who profess to receive Christianity with great reverence as a matter of faith, who yet do not pretend to adopt it is a rule of conduct; I shall conclude these slight remarks with some short animadversions on another set of men, and that not a small one, among the decent and the fashionable, who profess to think it exhibits an admirable system of morals, while they deny its divine authority; though that authority alone can make the necessity of obeying its precepts binding on the consciences of men.

This is a very discreet scheme; for such persons at once save themselves from the discredit of having their understanding imposed upon by a supposed blind submission to evidences and authorities; and yet, prudently enough, secure to themselves, in no small degree, the reputation of good men. By steering this middle kind of course, they contrive to be reckoned liberal by the *philosophers*, and decent by the believers.

But we are not to expect to see the pure morality of the Gospel very carefully transfused into the lives of

of such objectors. And indeed it would be unjust to imagine that the precepts *should* be most scrupulously observed by those who reject the authority. The influence of divine truth must necessarily best prepare the heart for an unreserved obedience to its laws. If we do not depend on the offers of the Gospel, we shall want the best motive to the actions and performances which it enjoins. A lively belief *must* therefore precede a hearty obedience. Let those who think otherwise hear what the Saviour of the World has said: "For this end was I born, and for this "cause came I into the world, that I might bear wit-"ness unto the truth." Those who reject the Gospel, therefore, reject the *power* of performing good actions. That command, for instance, to set "our "affections on things above," will operate but faintly, till that spirit from which the command proceeds touches the heart, and convinces it that no human good is worthy of the entire affection of an immortal creature. And unreserved faith in the promiser *must* precede our acceptable performance of any duty to which the promise is annexed.

But as to a set of duties enforced by no other motive than a bare acquiescence in their beauty, and a cold conviction of their propriety, but impelled by no obedience to his authority who imposes them; though we know not how well they might be performed by pure and impeccable beings, yet we know how they commonly *are* performed by frail and disorderly creatures, fallen from their innocence, and corrupt in their very natures.

Nothing but a conviction of the truth of Christianity can reconcile thinking beings to the extraordinary appearances of things in the Creator's moral government of the world. The works of God are an enigma, of which his word alone is the solution. The dark veil which is thrown over the divine dispensations

sation in this lower world, must naturally shock those who consider only the single scene which is acting on the present stage; but is reconcileable to him who, having learnt from revelation the nature of the laws by which the great Author acts, trusts confidently that the catastrophe will set all to rights. The confusion which sin and the passions have introduced; the triumph of wickedness; the seemingly arbitrary disproportion of human conditions, accountable on no scheme but that which the Gospel has opened to us—have all a natural tendency to withdraw from the love of God the hearts of those who erect themselves into critics on the divine conduct, and yet will not study the plan, and get acquainted with the rules, so far as it has pleased the Supreme Disposer to reveal them.

Till therefore the word of God is used as "a lamp "to their paths," men can neither truly discern the crookedness of their own ways, nor the perfection of that light by which they are directed to walk. And this light can only be seen by its own proper brightness: it has no other medium. Until therefore "the "secret of the Lord" is with men, they will not truly "fear him;" until he has "enlarged their hearts" with the knowledge and belief of his word, they will not very vigorously run "the way of his command-"ments." Until they have acquired that "faith, "without which it is impossible to please God," they will not attain that "holiness, without which no man "can see him."

And indeed if God has thought fit to make the Gospel an instrument of salvation, we must own the necessity of receiving it as a divine institution, before it is likely to operate very effectually on the human conduct. The great Creator, if we may judge by analogy from natural things, is so just and wise an œconomist, that he always adapts, with the most accurate

accurate precision, the instrument to the work; and never lavishes more means than are necessary to accomplish the proposed end. If therefore Christianity had been intended for nothing more than a mere system of ethics, such a system surely might have been produced at an infinitely less expence. The long chain of prophecy; the succession of miracles, the labours of apostles, the blood of the saints, to say nothing of the great and costly sacrifice which the Gospel records, might surely have been spared. Lessons of mere human virtue might have been delivered by some suitable instrument of human wisdom, strengthened by the visible authority of human power. A bare system of morals might have been communicated to mankind with a more reasonable prospect of advantage, by means not so repugnant to human pride. A mere scheme of conduct might have been delivered with far greater probability of the success of its reception by Antoninus the emperor, or Plato the philosopher, than by Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman.

Christianity, then, must be embraced entirely, if it be received at all. It must be taken, without mutilation, as a perfect scheme, in the way in which God has been pleased to reveal it. It must be accepted, not as exhibiting beautiful parts, but as presenting one consummate whole, of which the perfection arises from coherence and dependence, from relation and consistency. Its power will be weakened, and its energy destroyed, if every caviller pulls out a pin, or obstructs a spring with the presumptuous view of being modelling the divine work and making it go to his own mind. There must be no breaking this system into portions of which we are at liberty to choose one and reject another There is no separating the evidences from the doctrines, the doctrines from the precepts, belief from obedience,

obedience, morality from piety, the love of our neighbour from the love of God. If we allow Christianity to be any thing, we must allow it to be every thing: if we allow the Divine Author to be indeed unto us "wisdom and righteousness," he must be also "sanctification and redemption."

Christianity then is assuredly something more than a mere set of rules; and faith, though it never pretended to be the substitute for an useful life, is indispensibly necessary to its acceptance with God. The Gospel never offers to make religion supercede morality, but everywhere clearly proves that morality is not the whole of religion. Piety is not only necessary as a *means*, but is itself a most important *end*. It is not only the best principle of moral conduct, but is an indispensible and absolute duty in itself. It is not only the highest motive to the practice of virtue, but is a prior obligation, and absolutely necessary, even when detached from its immediate influence on outward actions. Religion will survive all the virtues of which it is the source; for we shall be living in the noblest exercises of piety when we shall have no objects on which to exercise many human virtues. When there will be no distress to be relieved, no injuries to be forgiven, no evil habits to be subdued, there will be a Creator to be blessed and adored, a Redeemer to be loved and praised.

To conclude, a real Christian is not such merely by habit, profession, or education; he is not a Christian in order to acquit his sponsors of the engagements they entered into in his name; but he is one who has embraced Christianity from a conviction of its truth, and an experience of its excellence. He is not only confident in matters of faith by evidences suggested to his understanding, or reasons which correspond to his enquiries; but all these evidence

dences of truth, all these principles of goodness, are worked into his heart, and exhibit themselves in his practice. He sees so much of the body of the great truths and fundamental points of religion, that he has a satisfactory trust in those lesser branches which ramify to infinity from the parent stock; though he may not individually and completely comprehend them all. He is so powerfully convinced of the general truth, and so deeply impressed by the general spirit of the Gospel, that he is not startled by every little difficulty, he is not staggered by every "hard "saying." Those depths of mystery which surpass his understanding do not shake his faith, and this, not because he is credulous, and given to take things upon trust, but because, knowing that his foundations are right, he sees how one truth of scripture supports another like the bearings of a geometrical building; because he sees the aspect one doctrine has upon another; because he sees the consistency of each with the rest, and the place, order, and relation of all. The real Christian by no means rejects reason from his religion; so far from it, he most carefully exercises it in furnishing his mind with all the evidences of its truth. But he does not stop here. Christianity furnishes him with a living principle of action, with the vital influences of the holy spirit, which, while it enlightens his faculties, rectifies his will, turns his knowledge into practice, sanctifies his heart, changes his habits, and proves, that when faithfully received, the word of truth "is life in-"deed, and is spirit indeed!"

REMARKS

ON THE

SPEECH OF M. DUPONT,

MADE IN THE

NATIONAL CONVENTION OF FRANCE,

ON THE SUBJECTS OF

RELIGION and PUBLIC EDUCATION.

☞ *The Profits of this Publication, which were considerable, were given to the* FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.

A

PREFATORY ADDRESS

TO THE

LADIES, &c. of GREAT BRITAIN,

IN BEHALF OF THE

FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.

If it be allowed that there may arise occasions so extraordinary, that all the lesser motives of delicacy ought to vanish before them; it is presumed that the present emergency will be considered as presenting one of those occasions, and will in some measure justify the hardiness of this Address from a private individual, who, stimulated by the urgency of the case, sacrifices inferior considerations to the ardent desire of raising further supplies towards relieving a distress as pressing as it is unexampled.

We are informed by public advertisement, that the large sums already so liberally subscribed for the Emigrant Clergy are almost exhausted. Authentic information

information adds, that multitudes of distressed Exiles in the island of Jersey, are on the point of wanting bread.

Very many to whom this address is made have already contributed. O let them not be weary in well-doing! I know that many are making generous exertions for the just and natural claims of the widows and children of our own brave seamen and soldiers. Let it not be said, that the present is an *interfering* claim. Those to whom I write, have bread enough, and to spare. You, who fare sumptuously every day, and yet complain that you have little to bestow, let not this bounty be subtracted from another bounty, but subtract it rather from some superfluous expence.

The beneficent and right-minded want no arguments to be pressed upon them; but it is not those alone whom I address; I write to persons of every description. Luxurious habits of living, which really furnish the distressed with the fairest grounds for application, are too often urged by those who practice them as a motive for withholding assistance, and produced as a plea for having little to spare. Let her who indulges such habits, and pleads such excuses in consequence, reflect, that by retrenching *one* costly dish from her abundant table, by cutting off the superfluities of *one* expensive desert, omitting *one* evening's public amusement, she may furnish at least a week's subsistence to more than one person*, as liberally bred perhaps as herself, and who, in his own country, may have often tasted how much more blessed it is to give than to receive——to a once affluent minister of religion, who has been long accus-

* Mr. Bowdler's letter states, that about Six Shillings a week includes the expenses of each Priest at Winchester.

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tomed to bestow the necessaries he is now reduced to solicit.

Even your young daughters, whom maternal prudence has not yet furnished with the means of bestowing, may be cheaply taught the first rudiments of charity, together with an important lesson of œconomy: they may be taught to sacrifice a feather, a set of ribbons, an expensive ornament, an idle diversion. And if they are on this occasion instructed, that there is no true charity without self-denial, they will *gain* more than they are called upon to *give*: for the suppression of one luxury for a charitable purpose, is the exercise of two virtues, and this without any pecuniary expence.—An indulgence is abridged and Christian charity is exercised.

Let the sick and afflicted remember how dreadful it must be, to be exposed to the sufferings they feel without one of the alleviations which mitigate *their* affliction. How dreadful it is to be without comforts, without necessaries, without a home,—*without a country!* While the gay and prosperous would do well to recollect, how suddenly and terribly those unhappy persons for whom we plead, were, by the surprising vicissitudes of life, thrown down from heights of gaiety and prosperity equal to what *they* are now enjoying. And let those who have husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, or friends, reflect on the uncertainties of war, and the revolution of human affairs. It is only by imagining the possibility that those who are dear to us may be placed by the instability of human events in the same calamitous circumstances, that we can obtain an adequate feeling of the woes we are called upon to commiserate.

In a distress so wide and comprehensive as the present, many are prevented from giving by that popular excuse—"That it is but a drop of water in the ocean." But let them reflect, that if all the individual

dual drops were withheld, there would be no ocean at all; and the inability to give much ought not, on any occasion, to be converted into an excuse for giving nothing. Even moderate circumstances need not plead an exemption. The industrious tradesman will not, even in a political view, be eventually a loser by his small contribution. The money now raised is neither carried out of our country, nor dissipated in luxuries, but returns again to the community; returns to our shops and to our markets, to procure the bare necessaries of life.

Some have objected to the difference of *religion* of those for whom we solicit. Such an objection hardly deserves a serious answer. Surely if the superstitious Tartar hopes to become possessed of the courage and talents of the enemy he slays, the Christian is not afraid of catching, or of propagating the error of the sufferer he relieves.—Christian charity is of no party. We plead not for their faith, but for their wants. But while we affirm that it is not for their popery but their poverty for which we solicit; yet let the more scrupulous, who look for desert as well as distress in the objects of their bounty, bear in mind, that if these men could have sacrificed their conscience to their convenience, they had not now been in this country; and if we wish for proselytes, who knows but it may be the first step towards their conversion, if we shew them the purity of *our* religion, by the beneficence of our actions.

If you will permit me to press upon you such high motives, (and it were to be wished that in every action we were to be influenced only by the highest,) perhaps no act of bounty to which you may be called out, can ever come so immediately, and so literally under that solemn and affecting description, which will be recorded in the great day of account,—*I was a stranger, and ye took me in.*——

The following is an exact Translation from a SPEECH *made in the National Convention at Paris, on Friday the 14th of December 1792, in a Debate on the Subject of establishing Public Schools for the Education of Youth, by Citizen* DUPONT, *a Member of considerable Weight; and as the Doctrines contained in it were received with unanimous Applause, except from two or three of the Clergy, it may be fairly considered as an Exposition of the Creed of that Enlightened Assembly. Translated from* Le Moniteur *of Sunday the 16th of December 1792.*

WHAT! Thrones are overturned! Sceptres broken! Kings expire! And yet the altars of GOD remain! (Here there is a murmur from some Members; and the Abbé ICHON demands that the person speaking may be called to order.) Tyrants, in outrage to nature, continue to burn an impious incense on those altars! (Some murmurs arise, but they are lost in the applauses from the majority of the Assembly.) The thrones that have been reversed, have left these altars naked, unsupported, and tottering. A single breath of enlightened reason will now be sufficient to make them disappear; and if humanity is under obligations to the French nation for the first of these benefits, the fall of Kings, can it be doubted but that the French people, now sovereign, will be wise enough, in like manner, to overthrow those altars and *those Idols* to which those Kings have hitherto made them subject? *Nature* and *Reason*, these ought to be the gods of men! These are my gods! (Here the Abbé AUDREIN cried out, "There is no bear-" ing this;" and rushed out of the Assembly.—A

great laugh.) Admire *nature*—cultivate *reason*.—And you, Legislators, if you desire that the French people should be happy, make haste to propagate these principles, and to teach them in your primary schools, instead of those fanatical principles which have hitherto been taught. The tyranny of Kings was confined to make their people miserable in this life—but those other tyrants, the Priests, extend their dominion into another, of which they have no other idea than of eternal punishments; a doctrine which some men have hitherto had the good nature to believe. But the moment of the catastrophe is come—all these prejudices must fall at the same time. *We must destroy them, or they will destroy us.*—For myself, I honestly avow to the Convention, *I am an atheist!* (Here there is some noise and tumult. But a great number of members cry out, "What is that "to us—you are an honest man!") But I defy a single individual, amongst the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, to make against me any well-grounded reproach. I doubt whether the Christians or the Catholics, of which the last speaker, and those of his opinion, have been talking to us, can make the same challenge.—(Great applauses.) There is another consideration—Paris has had great losses. It has been deprived of the commerce of luxury; of that factitious splendour which was found at courts, and invited strangers hither. Well! we must repair these losses.—Let me then represent to you the times, that are fast approaching, when our philosophers, whose names are celebrated throughout Europe, PETION, SYEYES, CONDORCET, and others—surrounded in our Pantheon, as the Greek philosophers were at Athens, with a crowd of disciples coming from all parts of Europe, walking like the Peripatetics, and teaching—this man, the system of the universe, and developing the progress of all human knowledge; that,

that, perfectioning the social system, and shewing in our decree of the 17th of June 1789, the seeds of the insurrections of the 14th of July, and the 10th of August, and of all those insurrections which are spreading with such rapidity throughout Europe—so that these young strangers, on their return to their respective countries, may spread the same lights, and may operate, *for the happiness of mankind*, similar revolutions throughout the world.

(Numberless applauses arose, almost throughout the whole Assembly, and in the galleries.)

REMARKS

ON THE

SPEECH OF MR. DUPONT,

ON THE SUBJECTS OF

RELIGION and PUBLIC EDUCATION.

IT is presumed that it may not be thought unseasonable at this critical time to offer to the public, and especially to the more religious part of it, a few slight observations, occasioned by the late famous speech of Mr. Dupont, which exhibits the confession of faith of a considerable Member of the French National Convention. Though the speech itself has been pretty generally read, yet it was thought necessary to prefix it to these remarks, lest such as have no already perused it, might, from an honest reluctance to credit the existence of such principles, dispute its authenticity, and accuse the remarks, if unaccompanied by the speech, of a spirit of invective and unfair exaggeration. At the same time it must be confessed, that its impiety is so monstrous, that many good men were of opinion it ought not to be made familiar to the minds of Englishmen; for there

are

are crimes with which even the imagination should never come in contact, and which it is almost safer not to controvert than to detail.

But as an ancient nation intoxicated their slaves, and then exposed them before their children, in order to increase their horror of intemperance; so it is hoped that this piece of impiety may be placed in such a light before the eyes of the Christian reader, that, in proportion as his detestation is raised, his faith, instead of being shaken, will be only so much the more strengthened.

This celebrated speech, though delivered in an assembly of politicians, is not on a question of politics, but on one as superior to all political considerations as the soul is to the body, as eternity is to time. The object of this oration is not to dethrone kings, but HIM by whom kings reign. It does not excite the cry of indignation in the orator that *Louis* the Sixteenth reigns, but that *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

Nor is this the declaration of some obscure and anonymous person, but it is an exposition of the creed of a public leader. It is not a sentiment hinted in a journal, hazarded in a pamphlet, or thrown out at a disputing club; but it is the implied faith of the rulers of a great nation.

Little notice would have been due to this famous speech, if it had conveyed the sentiments of only *one* vain orator; but it should be observed, that it was heard, received, *applauded*, with two or three exceptions only—a fact, which you, who have scarcely believed in the existence of atheism, will hardly credit, and which, for the honour of the eighteenth century, it is hoped that our posterity will reject as totally incredible.

A love of liberty, generous in its principle, inclines some well meaning but mistaken men still to favour the

the proceedings of the National Convention of France. They do not yet perceive that the licentious wildness which has been excited in that country, is destructive of all true happiness, and no more resembles liberty, than the tumultuous joys of the drunkard resemble the chearfulness of a sober and well-regulated mind.

To those who do not know of what strange inconsistencies man is made up; who have not considered how some persons, having at first been hastily and heedlessly drawn in as approvers, by a sort of natural progression, soon become principals:—to those who have never observed by what a variety of strange associations in the mind, opinions that seem the most irreconcilable meet at some unsuspected turning, and come to be united in the same man;—to all such it may appear quite incredible, that well-meaning and even pious people should continue to applaud the principles of a set of men who have publicly made known their intention of abolishing Christianity, as far as the demolition of altars, priests, temples, and institutions, *can* abolish it. As to the religion itself, this also they may traduce and reject, but we know, from the comfortable promise of an authority still sacred in this country at least, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Let me not be misunderstood by those to whom these slight remarks are principally addressed; by that class of well intentioned but ill-judging people, who favour at least, if they do not adopt, the prevailing sentiments of the new Republic. You are not here accused of being the wilful abettors of infidelity. God forbid! "we are persuaded better "things of you, and things which accompany sal-"vation." But this *ignis fatuus* of liberty and universal brotherhood, which the French are madly pursuing, with the insignia of freedom in one hand, and the bloody bayonet in the other, has bewitched

your

your senses, is misleading your steps, and betraying you to ruin. You are gazing at a meteor raised by the vapours of vanity, which these wild and infatuated wanderers are pursuing to their destruction; and though for a moment you mistake it for a heaven-born light, which leads to the perfection of human freedom, you will, should you join in the mad pursuit, soon discover that it will conduct you over dreary wilds and sinking bogs, only to plunge you in deep and inevitable destruction.

Much, very much is to be said in vindication of your favouring in the *first instance* their political projects. The cause they took in hand seemed to be the great cause of human kind. Its very name insured its popularity. What English heart did not exult at the demolition of the Bastile? What lover of his species did not triumph in the warm hope, that one of the finest countries in the world would soon be one of the most free? Popery and despotism, though chained by the gentle influence of Louis the Sixteenth, had actually slain their thousands. Little was it then imagined, that anarchy and atheism, the monsters who were about to succeed them, would soon slay their ten thousands. If we cannot regret the defeat of the two former tyrants, what must they be who can triumph in the mischiefs of the two latter? Who, I say, that had a head to reason, or a heart to feel, did not glow with the hope, that from the ruins of tyranny, and the rubbish of popery, a beautiful and finely framed edifice would in time have been constructed, and that ours would not have been the only country in which the patriot's fair idea of well-understood liberty, the politician's view of a perfect Constitution, together with the establishment of a pure and reasonable, a sublime and rectified Christianity, might be realized?

But,

But, alas! it frequently happens that the wise and good are not the most adventurous in attacking the mischiefs which they are the first to perceive and lament. With a timidity in some respects virtuous, they fear attempting any thing which may possibly aggravate the evils they deplore, or put to hazard the blessings they already enjoy. They dread plucking up the wheat with the tares, and are rather apt, with a spirit of hopeless resignation,

> "To bear the ills they have,
> "Than fly to others that they know not of."

While sober-minded and considerate men, therefore, sat mourning over this complicated mass of error, and waited till God, in his own good time, should open the blind eyes; the vast scheme of reformation was left to that set of rash and presumptuous adventurers, who are generally watching how they may convert public grievances to their own personal account. It was undertaken, not upon the broad basis of a wise and well-digested scheme, of which all the parts should contribute to the perfection of one consistent whole: it was carried on, not by those steady measures, founded on rational deliberation, which are calculated to accomplish so important an end; not with a temperance which indicated a sober love of law, or a sacred regard for religion; but with the most extravagant lust of power, with the most inordinate vanity which perhaps ever instigated human measures—a lust of power which threatens to extend its desolating influence over the whole globe;—a vanity of the same destructive species with that which stimulated the celebrated incendiary of Ephesus, who being weary of his native obscurity and insignificance, and preferring infamy to oblivion, could contrive no other road to fame and immortality,

immortality, than that of setting fire to the exquisite Temple of Diana. He *was* remembered indeed, as he desired to be, but it was only to be execrated; while the seventh wonder of the world lay prostrate through his crime.

But too often that daring boldness which excites admiration, is not energy, is not virtue, is not genius. It is blindness in the judgment, is vanity in the heart. Strong and unprecedented measures, plans instantaneously conceived, and as rapidly executed, argue, not ability, but arrogance. A mind continually driven out in quest of presumptuous novelties, is commonly a mind void of real resources within, and incapable of profiting from observation without. Sure principles cannot be ascertained without experiment, and experiment requires more time than the sanguine can spare, and more patience than the vain possess. In the crude speculations of these rash reformists, few obstructions occur. It is like taking a journey, not on a road, but on a map. Difficulties are unseen, or are kept in the background. Impossibilities are smothered, or rather they are not suffered to be born. Nothing is felt but the ardour of enterprize, nothing is seen but the certainty of success. Whereas if difficulties grow out of sober experiment, the disappointments attending them generate humility; the failures inseparable from the best concerted human undertakings, serve at once to multiply resources, and to excite self-distrust; while ideal projectors, and actual demolishers, are the most conceited of mortals. It never occurs to them that those defects of old institutions, on which they frame their objections, are equally palpable to all other men. It never occurs to them that phrenzy can demolish faster than wisdom can build; that pulling down the strongest edifice is far more easy than the construction of the meanest; that the

the most ignorant labourer is competent to the one, while for the other the skill of the architect; and the patient industry of the workman must unite. That a sound judgment will profit by the errors of our predecessors, as well as by their excellences. That there is a retrospective wisdom to which much of our prospective wisdom owes it birth; and that after all, neither the perfection pretended to, nor the pride which accompanies the pretension, "is made for "man."

It is the same over-ruling vanity which operates in their politics, and in their religion, which makes Kersaint* boast of carrying his destructive projects from the Tagus to the Brazils, and from Mexico to the shores of the Ganges; which makes him menace to outstrip the enterprizes of the most extravagant hero of romance, and almost undertake with the marvellous celerity of the nimble footed Puck,

> "To put a girdle round about the earth
> "In forty minutes."———

It is the same vanity, still the master-passion in the bosom of a Frenchman, which leads Dupont and Manuel to undertake in their orations to abolish the Sabbath, to exterminate the priesthood, to erect a pantheon for the world, to restore the peripatetic philosophy, and in short to revive every thing of ancient Greece, except the pure taste, the profound wisdom, the love of virtue, the veneration of the laws, and that high degree of reverence which even virtuous Pagans professed for the deity.

It is the same spirit of novelty, and the same hostility to established opinions, which dictated the preposterous and impious doctrine that *death is an eternal sleep*. The Prophets and Apostles assert the contrary. David expressly says, "when I *awake* up,

* See his Speech, enumerating their intended projects.

"up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied;" implying, that our true life will begin at our departure out of this world. The destruction or dissolution of the body will be the revival, not the death, of the soul.—It is to the *living* the Apostle says, "*awake* "thou that *sleepest*, and arise from the DEAD, and "Christ shall give thee light."

It is surely to be charged to the inadequate and wretched hands into which the work of reformation fell, and not to the impossibility of amending the civil and religious institutions of France, that all has succeeded so ill. It cannot be denied perhaps that a reforming spirit was wanted in that country; their government was not more despotic, than their church was superstitious and corrupt.

But though this is readily granted, and though it may be unfair to blame those who in the *first outset* of the French Revolution, rejoiced even on religious motives; yet it is astonishing, how any pious person, even with all the blinding power of prejudice, can think without horror of the *present* state of France. It is no less wonderful how any rational man could, even in the beginning of the Revolution transfer that reasoning, however just it might be, when applied to France, to the case of England. For what can be more unreasonable, than to draw from different, and even opposite premises, the same conclusion? Must a revolution be equally necessary in the case of two sorts of Government, and two sorts of Religion, which are the very reverse of each other?—opposite in their genius, unlike in their fundamental principles, and completely different in each of their component parts.

That despotism, priestcraft, intolerance, and superstition, are terrible evils, no candid Christian it is presumed will deny; but, blessed be God, though these mischiefs are not yet entirely banished from the

the face of the earth, they have scarcely any existence in this happy country.

To guard against a real danger, and to cure actual abuses, of which the existence has been first plainly proved, by the application of a suitable remedy, requires diligence as well as courage; observation as well as genius; patience and temperance as well as zeal and spirit. It requires the union of that clear head and sound heart which constitute the true patriot. But to conjure up fancied evils, or even greatly to aggravate real ones, and then to exhaust our labour in combating them, is the characteristic of a distempered imagination and an ill-governed spirit.

Romantic crusades, the ordeal trial, drowning of witches, the torture, and the inquisition, have been justly reprobated as the foulest stains of the respective periods in which, to the disgrace of human reason, they existed; but would any man be rationally employed, who should stand up gravely to declaim against these as the predominating mischiefs of the present century? Even the whimsical Knight of La Mancha himself, would not fight windmills that were pulled down; yet I will venture to say, that the above-named evils are at present little more chimerical than some of those now so bitterly complained of among us. It is not as Dryden said, when one of his works was unmercifully abused, that the piece has not faults enough in it, but the critics have not had the wit to fix upon the right ones.

It is allowed that, as a Nation, we do not want faults; but our political critics err in the objects of their censure. They say little of those real and pressing evils resulting from our own corruption, of that depravity which constitutes the actual miseries of life; while they gloomily speculate upon a thousand imaginary political grievances, and fancy that the reformation of our rulers and our legislators is all

all that is wanting to make us a happy people. Alas!

> How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part, which Kings or Laws can cause, or cure.

The principles of just and equitable government were, perhaps, never more fully established, nor was public justice ever more exactly administered. Pure and undefiled religion was never laid more open to all, than at this day. I wish I could say we were a religious people; but this at least may be safely asserted, that the great truths of religion were never better understood; that Christianity was never more completely stripped from all its incumbrances, and disguises or more thoroughly purged from human infusions, and from whatever is debasing in human institutions, than it is at this day in this country.

In vain we look around us to discover the ravages of religious tyranny, or the triumphs of priestcraft or superstition. Who attempts to impose any yoke upon our reason? Who seeks to put any blind on the eyes of the most illiterate? Who fetters the judgment or enslaves the conscience of the meanest of our Protestant brethren? Nay, such is the power of pure Christianity, that genuine Christianity which is exhibited in our liturgy to enlighten the understanding, as well as to reform the heart, and such are the advantages which the most abject in this country possess for enjoying its privileges, that the poorest peasant among us, if he be as religious as multitudes of his station really are, has clearer ideas of God and his own soul, purer notions of that true liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, than the mere disputer of this world, though he possess every splendid advantage which education, wisdom, and genius can bestow. I am not speaking either

of

of a *perfect* form of Government, or a *perfect* Church Establishment, because I am speaking of Institutions which are human; and the very idea of their being human, involves also the idea of imperfection. But I am speaking of the best constituted Government, and the best constituted National Church with which the history of mankind is yet acquainted. Time, that silent instructor, and experience, that great rectifier of the judgment, will more and more discover to us what is wanting to the perfection of both. And if we may trust to the active genius of Christian Liberty, and to that liberal and candid spirit which is the characteristic of the age we live in, there is little doubt but that a temperate and well-regulated zeal will, at a convenient season, correct whatsoever sound policy shall suggest as wise and expedient to be corrected.

If there are errors in the Church, and it does not perhaps require the sharp-sightedness of a keen opposer to discover that there are, there is at least nothing like fierce intolerance, or spiritual usurpation. A fiery zeal and an uncharitable bigotry might have furnished matter for a well-deserved ecclesiastical philippic in other times; but thanks to the temper of the present day, unless we conjure up a spirit of religious chivalry, and sally forth in quest of imaginary evils, we shall not apprehend any danger from persecution or enthusiasm. If grievances there are, they do not appear to be those which result from polemic pride and rigid bigotry, but are of a kind far different.

If the warm sun of prosperity has unhappily produced its too common effect, in relaxing the vigour of religious exertion; if, in too many instances, security has engendered sloth, and affluence produced dissipation; let us implore the Divine grace, that the present alarming crisis may rouse the careless, and

and quicken the supine; that our pastors may be convinced that the Church has less to fear from external violence, than from internal decay; nay, that even the violence of attack is often really beneficial, by exciting that activity which enables us to repel danger, and that increase of diligence is the truest accession of strength. May they be convinced that the love of power, with which their enemies perhaps unjustly accuse them, is not more fatal than the love of pleasure: that no stoutness of orthodoxy in opinion can atone for a too close assimilation with the manners of the world; that heresy without, is less to be dreaded than indifference from within: that the most regular clerical education, the most scrupulous attention to forms, and even the strictest conformity to the established discipline and opinions of the Church, will avail but little to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, without a strict spirit of personal watchfulness, habitual self-denial, and laborious exertion.

Though it is not here intended to animadvert on any political complaint which is not in some sort connected with religion; yet it is presumed it may not be quite foreign to the present purpose to remark, that among the reigning complaints against our civil administration, the most plausible seems to be that excited by the supposed danger of an invasion of the liberty of the press. Were this apprehension well-founded, we should indeed be threatened by one of the most grievous misfortunes that can befal a free country. The liberty of the press is not only a most noble privilege itself, but the guardian of all our other liberties and privileges, and, notwithstanding the abuse which has lately been made of this valuable possession, yet every man of a sound unprejudiced mind is well aware that true liberty of every kind is scarcely inferior in importance to any object

object for which human activity can contend. Nay, the very abuse of a good, often makes us more sensible of the value of the good itself. Fair and well-proportioned Freedom will ever retain all her native beauty to a judicious eye, nor will the genuine loveliness of her form be the less prized for our having lately contemplated the distorted features and false colouring of her caricature, as presented to us by the daubing hand of Gallic patriots.

But highly as the freedom of the press ought to be valued, would it really be so very heavy a misfortune, if corrupt and inflaming publications, calculated to destroy that virtue which every good man is anxious to preserve, that peace which every honest man is struggling to secure, should, just at this alarming period, be somewhat difficult to be obtained? Would it be so very grievous a national calamity, if the crooked progeny of treason and blasphemy should find it a little inconvenient to venture forth from their lurking-holes, and range abroad in open day? Is the cheapness of poison, or the facility with which it may be obtained, to be reckoned among the real advantages of medicinal repositories? And can the easiness of access to seditious or atheistical writings, be seriously numbered among the substantial blessings of any country? Would France, at this day, have had much solid cause of regret, if most of the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and d'Alembert, (the prolific seed of their wide-spreading tree,) had found more difficulty in getting into the world, or been less profusely circulated when in it? And might not England at this moment have been just as happy in her ignorance, if the famous orations of Citizen Dupont and Citizen Manuel had been confined

confined to their own enlightened and philosophical countries*?

To return to these orations:—We have too often, in our own nation, seen and deplored the mischiefs of irreligion, arising incidentally from a neglected or an abused education. But what mischiefs will not irreligion produce, when, in the projected schools of France, as announced to us by the two metaphysical legislators above mentioned, impiety shall be taught by system? When out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the monstrous opinions, exhibited by Dupont and Manual, shall be perfected? When the fruits of atheism, dropping from their newly-planted tree of liberty, shall pollute the very fountains of knowledge? When education, being poisoned in all her springs, the rising generation will be taught to look on atheism as decorous, and Chris-

* *Extract from Monf. Manuel's Letter to the National Convention, dated January* 26, 1793.

"The priests of a republic are its magistrates, the law its gospel.—What mission can be more august than that of the instructors of youth, who having themselves escaped from the hereditary prejudice of all sects, point out to the human race their inalienable rights, founded upon that sublime wisdom which pervades all nature. Religious faith, impressed on the mind of an infant seven years old, will lead to perfect slavery; for dogmas at that age are only arbitrary commands. Ah! what is belief, without examination, without conviction? It renders men either melancholy or mad, &c.

"Legislators! Virtue wants neither temples nor synagogues. It is not from priests we learn to do good or noble actions. No religion must be taught in schools which are to be national ones. To prescribe one, would be to prefer it to all others. There history must speak of sects, as she speaks of other events It would become your wisdom, perhaps, to order that the pupils of the republic should not enter the temples before the age of seventeen. Reason must not be taken by surprise, &c. Hardly were children born before they fell into the hands of priests, who first blinded their eyes, and then delivered them over to kings. Wherever kings cease to govern, priests must cease to educate."

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tianity as eccentric? When atheism shall be considered as a proof of accomplised breeding, and religion as the stamp of a vulgar education? When the regular course of obedience to masters and tutors will consist in renouncing the hope of everlasting happiness, and in deriding the idea of future punishment? When every man and every child, in conformity with the principles professed in the Convention, shall presume to say with his tongue, what hitherto even the fool has only dared to say in his heart, *That there is no God**.

Christianity, which involves the whole duty of man, divides that duty into two portions,—the love of God, and the love of our neighbour. Now, as these two principles have their being from the same source, and derive their vitality from their union; so impiety furnishes the direct converse,—*That* Atheism which destroys all belief in, and of course cuts off all love of, and communion with God, disqualifies for the due performance of the duties of civil and social life. There is, in its way, the same consistency, agreement, and uniformity, between the principles which constitute an infidel and a bad member of society, as there is between giving "glo- "ry to God in the highest," and exercising "peace "and good will to men."

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that though the French are continually binding themselves by oaths, they have not mentioned the name of God in any oath which has been invented since the revolution. It may also appear curious to the English reader, that though in almost all the addresses of congratulation, which were sent by the associated clubs from this country to the National Convention, the success of the French arms was in part ascribed to Divine Providence, yet in none of the answers was the least notice ever taken of this. And to shew how the same spirit spreads itself among every description of men in France, their Admiral Latouche, after having described the dangers to which his ship was exposed in a storm, says, *we owe our existence to the tutelary Genius which watches over the destiny of the French republic, and the defenders of liberty and equality.*

My fellow Christians! This is not a strife of words; this is not a controversy about opinions of comparatively small importance, such as you have been accustomed at home to hear even good men dispute upon, when perhaps they would have acted a more wise and amiable part had they remained silent, sacrificing their mutual differences on the altar of Christian charity: But this bold renunciation of the first great fundamental article of faith, this daring rejection of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the World, is laying the axe and striking with a vigorous stroke at the root of all human happiness. It is tearing up the very foundation of human hope, and extirpating every true principle of human excellence. It is annihilating the very existence of virtue, by annihilating its motives, its sanctions, its obligations, its object, and its end.

That atheism will be the favoured and the popular tenet in France seems highly probable; whilst in that wild contempt of all religion, which has lately had the arrogance to call itself toleration, it is not improbable that Christianity itself may be tolerated in that country, as a sect not persecuted perhaps, but derided. It is, however, far from clear, that this *will* be the case, if the new doctrines should become generally prevalent. Atheists are not without their bigotry; they too have their spirit of exclusion and monopoly in a degree not inferior to the most superstitious monks. And that very spirit of intolerance which is now so much the object of their invective, would probably be no less the rule of their practice, if their will should ever be backed by power. It is true that Voltaire and the other great Apostles of infidelity have employed all the acuteness of their wit to convince us that irreligion never persecutes. To prove this, every art of false citation, partial extract, suppressed evidence, and gross misrepresentation, has

has been put in practice. But if this unsupported assertion were true, then Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin, Cyprian, and Basil, did not suffer for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Then the famous Christian apologists, most of them learned converts from the pagan philosophy, idly employed their zeal to abate a clamour which did not exist, and to propitiate emperors who did not persecute. Then Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, and Julian, those bitter enemies to Christianity, are suborned witnesses on her side. Then Ecclesiastical History is a series of falsehoods, and the Book of Martyrs a legend of romance*.

That one extravagant mischief should produce its opposite, is agreeable to the ordinary course of human events. That to the credulity of a dark and superstitious religion, a wanton contempt of all decency, and an unbridled prophaneness, should succeed; that to a government absolutely despotic, an utter abhorrence of all restraint and subordination should follow, though it is deplorable, yet it is not strange. The human mind, in flying from the extreme verge of one error, seldom stops till she has reached the opposite extremity. She generally passes by with a lofty disdain the obvious truth which lies directly in her road, and which is indeed commonly to be found in the mid-way, between the error she is flying from, and the error she is pursuing.

Is it a breach of Christian charity to conclude, from a view of the present state of the French, that since that deluded people have given up GOD, GOD, by a righteous retribution, seems to have renounced

* It may be objected here, that this is not applicable to the state of France; for that the Roman Emperors were not atheists or deists, but polytheists, with an established religion. To this it may be answered, that modern infidels not only deny the ten pagan persecutions, but accuse Christianity of being the only persecuting religion; and affirm, that only those who refuse to embrace it discover a spirit of toleration.

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them for a time, and to have given them over to their own hearts' lusts, *to work iniquity with greediness?* If such is their present career what is likely to be their appointed end? How fearfully applicable to them seems that awful denunciation against an ancient, offending people—" The Lord shall " smite thee with madnness, and bilndness, and as- " tonishment of heart!"

It is no part of the present design to enter into a detail of their political conduct; but I cannot omit to remark, that the very man in their long list of kings, who seemed best to have deserved their assumed appellation of *most Christian*, was also most favourable to their acquisition of liberty*: his moderation and humanity facilitated their plans, and increased their power, which, with unparalleled ingratitude, they employed to degrade his person and character in the eyes of mankind, by the blackest and most detestable arts, and at length to terminate his calamities by a crime which has excited the grief and indignation of all Europe.

On the trial and murder of that most unfortunate king, and on the inhuman proceedings which accompanied them, I shall purposely avoid dwelling, for it is not the design of these remarks to excite the passions. I will only say, that so monstrous has been the inversion of all order, law, humanity, justice, received opinion, good faith, and religion, that the conduct of his bloody executioners seems to have exhibited the most scrupulous conformity with the principles announced in the speeches we have been considering. In this one instance we must not call the French an inconsequent people. Savage brutality, rapine, treason, and murder have been

* Of this the French themselves were so well persuaded, that the title of *Restorateur de la Liberté Françoise*, was solemnly given to Louis XVIth by the Constituent Assembly.

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the noxious fruit gathered from these thorns; the baneful produce of these thistles. An overturn of all morals has been the well-proportioned offspring of a subversion of all principle.

But, notwithstanding the consistency, in this instance, between cause and consequence; so new and surprising have been the turns in their extraordinary projects, that to foretel what their next enterprise would be from what their last has been, has long baffled all calculation, has long bid defiance to all conjecture. Analogy from history, the study of past events, and an investigation of present principles and passions; judgment, memory, comparison, combination, and deduction, afford human sagacity but very slender assistance in its endeavours to develope their future plans. We have not even the data of consistent wickedness on which to build rational conclusions. Their crimes, though visibly connected by uniform depravity, are yet so surprisingly diversified by interfering absurdities, as to furnish no ground on which reasonable argument can be founded. Nay, such is their incredible eccentricity, that it is hardly extravagant to affirm, that improbability is become rather an additional reason for expecting any given event to take place.

But let us, in this yet happy country, learn at least one great and important truth, from the errors of this distracted people. Their conduct has awfully illustrated a position, which is not the less found for having been often controverted, That no degree of wit and learning, no progress in commerce, no advances in the knowledge of nature, or in the embellishments of art, can ever thoroughly tame that savage, the *natural human heart*, without RELIGION. The arts of social life may give sweetness to manners, and grace to language, and induce, in some degree, a respect for justice, truth, and humanity; but attainments

tainments derived from such inferior causes are no more than the semblance and the shadow of the qualities derived from pure Christianity. Varnish is an extraneous ornament, but true polish is a proof of the solidity of the body on whose surface it is produced. It depends greatly on the nature of the substance, is not superinduced by accidental causes, but in a good measure proceeds from internal soundness.

The poets of that classic country, whose style, sentiments, manners, and religion the French so effectually labour to imitate, have left keen and biting satire on the Roman vices. Against the late proceedings in France, no satirist need employ his pen; that of the historian will be quite sufficient. Truth will be the severest satire; Fact will put fable out of countenance; and the crimes which are usually held up to our abhorrence, and are rejected for their exaggeration in works of invention, will be regarded as flat and feeble by those who shall peruse the records of the tenth of August, of the second and third of September, and of the twenty-first of January.

If the same astonishing degeneracy in taste, principle, and practice, should ever come to flourish among *us*, Britain may still live to exult in the desolation of her cities, and in the destruction of her finest monuments of art; she may triumph in the peopling of the fortresses of her rocks and her forests; may exult in being once more restored to that glorious state of *liberty and equality*, when all subsisted by rapine and the chace; when all, O enviable privilege! were equally savage, equally indigent, and equally naked; her sons may extol it as the restoration of reason, the triumph of nature, and the consummation of liberty, that they are again brought to feed on acorns, instead of bread! Groves of consecrated misletoe may happily succeed

ceed to useless corn fields; and Thor and Woden may hope once more to be invested with all their bloody honours.

Let not any serious readers feel indignation, as if pains were ungenerously taken to involve their religious with their political opinions. Far be it from me to wound, unnecessarily, the feelings of people, many of whom are truly estimable: but it is much to be suspected, that certain opinions in politics have a tendency to lead to certain opinions in religion. Where so much is at stake, they will do well to keep their consciences tender, in order to which they should try to keep their discernment acute. They will do well to observe, that the same restless spirit of innovation is busily operating under various, though seemingly unconnected forms; to observe, that the same impatience of restraint, the same contempt of order, peace, and subordination, which makes men bad citizens, makes them bad Christians; and that to this secret, but almost infallible connexion between religious and political sentiment, does France owe her present unparalleled anarchy and impiety.

There are doubtless in that unhappy country multitudes of virtuous and reasonable men, who rather silently acquiesce in the authority of their present turbulent government, than embrace its principles or promote its projects from the sober conviction of their own judgment. These, together with those conscientious exiles whom this nation so honourably protects, may yet live to rejoice in the restoration of true liberty and solid peace to their native country, when light and order shall spring from the present darkness and confusion, and the reign of chaos shall be no more.

May I be permitted a short digression on the subject of the conduct of Great Britain to these exiles?

It

It shall only be to remark, that all the boasted conquests of our Edwards and our Henrys over the French nation, do not confer such substantial glory on our own country, as she derives from having received, protected, and supported, among innumerable multitudes of our sufferers, at a time and under circumstances so peculiarly disadvantageous to herself, *three thousand priests*, of a nation habitually her enemy, and of a religion intolerant and hostile to her own. This is the solid triumph of true Christianity; and it is worth remarking, that the deeds which poets and historians celebrate as rare and splendid actions; which they record, as sublime instances of greatness of soul, in the heroes of the Pagan world, are but the ordinary and habitual virtues which occur in the common course of action among Christians; quietly performed without effort or exertion, and with no view to renown or reward; but resulting naturally and consequently from the religion to which they belong.

So predominating is the power of an example we have once admired, and set up as a standard of imitation, and so fascinating has been the ascendancy of the Convention over the minds of those whose approbation of French politics commenced in the earlier periods of the Revolution, that it extends to the most trivial circumstances. I cannot forbear to notice this in an instance which, though inconsiderable in itself, yet ceases to be so when we view it in the light of a prevailing symptom of the reigning disease.

While the fantastic phraseology of the new Republic is such, as to be almost as disgusting to sound taste, as their doctrines are to sound morals, it is curious to observe how deeply the addresses, which have been sent to it from the Clubs * in this country,

* See the Collection of Addresses from England.

have

have been infected with it, as far at least as phrases and terms are objects of imitation. In the more leading points it is but justice to the French Convention to confess, that they are hitherto without rivals and without imitators; for who can aspire to emulate that compound of anarchy and atheism which in their debates is mixed up with the pedantry of a school-boy, the jargon of a cabal, and the vulgarity and ill-breeding of a Mob? One instance of the prevailing cant may suffice, where an hundred might be adduced; and it is not the most exceptionable.—To demolish every existing law and establishment; to destroy the fortunes and ruin the principles of every country into which they are carrying their destructive arms and their frantic doctrines; to untie or cut asunder every bond which holds society together; to impose their own arbitrary shackles where they succeed, and to demolish every thing where they fail. This desolating system, by a most unaccountable perversion of language, they are pleased to call by the endearing name of *fraternization*; and fraternization is one of the favourite terms which their admirers in this country have adopted. Little would a simple stranger, uninitiated in this new and surprising dialect, uninstructed by the political Lexicographers of modern France, imagine that the peaceful terms of *fellow citizen* and of *brother*, the winning offer of *freedom* and *happiness*, and the warm embrace of *fraternity*, were only watch-words by which they, in effect,

> Cry havoc,
> And let slip the dogs of war.

In numberless other instances, the fashionable language of France at this day would be as unintelligible to the correct writers of the age of Louis the XIVth,

XIVth, as their fashionable notions of liberty would be irreconcileable with those of the true Revolution Patriots of his great contemporary and victorious rival, William the Third.

Such is indeed their puerile rage for novelty in the invention of new words, and the perversion of their taste in the use of old ones, that the celebrated Vossius, whom Christina of Sweden oddly complimented by saying, that he was so learned as not only to know whence all words came, but whither they were going, would, *were he admitted to the honours of a sitting*, be obliged to confess, that he was equally puzzled to tell the one, as to foretel the other.

If it shall please the Almighty in his anger to let loose this infatuated people, as a scourge for the iniquities of the human race; if they are delegated by infinite justice to act, "as storm and tempest fulfilling his word; if they are commissioned to perform the errand of the destroying lightning or the avenging thunder-bolt, let us try at least to extract personal benefit from national calamity; let every one of us, high and low, rich and poor, enter upon this serious and humbling inquiry, how much his own individual offences have contributed to that awful aggregate of public guilt, which has required such a visitation. Let us carefully examine in what proportion we have separately added to that common stock of abounding iniquity, the description of which formed the character of an ancient nation, and is so peculiarly applicable to our own—*Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness.* Let every one of us humbly inquire, in the self-suspecting language of the disciples to their Divine Master—*Lord, is it I?* Let us learn to fear the fleets and armies of the enemy, much less than those iniquities at home which this alarming dispensation may be intended to chastize.

The

The war which the French have declared against us, is of a kind altogether unexampled in every respect; insomuch that human wisdom is baffled when it would pretend to conjecture what may be the event. But this at least we may safely say, that it is not so much the force of French bayonets, as the contamination of French principles, that ought to excite our apprehensions. We trust, that through the blessing of GOD we shall be defended from their open hostilities, by the temperate wisdom of our rulers, and the bravery of our fleets and armies; but the domestic danger arising from licentious and irreligious principles among ourselves, can only be guarded against by the personal care and vigilance of every one of us who values religion and the good order of society in this world, and an eternity of happiness in the next.

GOD grant that those who go forth to fight our battles, instead of being intimidated by the number of their enemies, may bear in mind, that "there is "no restraint with GOD to save by many or by few." And let the meanest among us who remains at home remember also, that even he may contribute to the internal safety of his country, by the integrity of hi private life, and to the success of her defenders, by following them with his fervent prayers. And in what war can the sincere Christian ever have stronger inducements and more reasonable encouragement to pray for the success of his country, than in this? Without entering far into any political principles, the discussion of which would be in a great measure foreign to the design of this little tract, it may be remarked, that the unchristian principle of *revenge* is not our motive to this war; *conquest* is not our object; nor have we had recourse to hostility, in order to effect a change in the internal government of France*.

France*. The present war is undoubtedly undertaken entirely on defensive principles. It is in defence of our king, our constitution, our religion, our laws, and consequently our *liberty*, in the sound, sober, and rational sense of that term. It is to defend ourselves from the savage violence of a crusade, made against all religion, as well as all government. If ever therefore a war was undertaken on the ground of self-defence and necessity—If ever men might be *literally* said to fight *pro* ARIS *et* FOCIS this seems to be the occasion.

The ambition of conquerors has been the source of great and extensive evils: religious fanaticism, of still greater. But little as I am disposed to become the apologist of either the one principle or the other, there is no extravagance in asserting, that they have seemed incapable of producing, even in ages, that extent of mischief, that variety of ruin, that comprehensive desolation, which *philosophy, falsely so called*, has produced in three years.

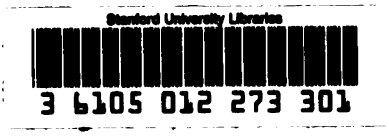
Christians! it is not a small thing—*it is your life.* The pestilence of irreligion which you detest, will insinuate itself imperceptibly with those manners, phrases, and principles which you admire and adopt. It is the humble wisdom of a Christian, to shrink from the most distant approaches to sin, to abstain from the very appearance of evil. If we would fly from the deadly contagion of atheism, let us fly from those seemingly remote, but not very indirect paths which lead to it. Let France chuse this day whom she will serve; *but, as for us and our houses, we will serve the Lord.*

* See the Report of Mr. Pitt's Speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 12, 1793, published by Woodfall.

And,

And, O gracious and long suffering God! before that awful period arrives, which shall exhibit the dreadful effects of such an education as the French nation are instituting; before a race of men can be trained up, not only without the knowledge of THEE, but in the contempt of THY most holy law, do THOU, in great mercy, change the heart of this people as the heart of one man. Give them not finally over to their own corrupt imaginations, to their own heart's lusts. But after having made them a fearful example to all the nations of the earth, what a people *can* do, who have cast off the fear of THEE, do THOU graciously bring them back to a sense of that law which they have violated, and to a participation of that mercy which they have abused; so that they may happily find, while the discovery can be attended with hope and consolation, that *doubtless there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a* GOD *who judgeth the earth.*

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.



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